THE PURSUIT OF JAVA:

THAI PANJI STORIES, MELAYU LINGUA FRANCA

AND THE QUESTION OF TRANSLATION

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CONTENTS

Summary

In spite of Indonesia's importance as a trading partner and a co-founder of the regional body ASEAN, the situation regarding knowledge about this country in present-day Thailand is admittedly quite desperate. Further, it is heavily dominated by the Western epistemic regime. In the search for an alternative to the current, dominant framework of understanding, this thesis argues that the Panji tales have, historically, constituted the bedrock of Thai knowledge about Indonesia. It examines the process by which the tales, highly popular in Java for centuries, were scripted into Thai in the eighteenth century and how they subsequently formed the prism for understanding Indonesia.

The plot of the Panji tales was highly adaptive, greatly expanding over time. It formed the inspiration for theatrical performances, paintings and so on, in Java as well as in the archipelagic world. In the Thai literary tradition, there are two main Panji versions titled *Inao* and *Dalang.* Both texts were presumably translated and recomposed in Thai verse-forms during the late Ayutthaya period. To provide a foundation for subsequent analysis, *Inao* is summarized and some key episodes are translated.

Next, questions of authorship and "translation" are tackled. In the Thai literary tradition, authorship was not attributed to the various emplotments, and a poem – particularly its sound patterns and euphonious voices – could be reworked and modified repeatedly. In such a situation, the original authors of both texts thus remained anonymous. Most likely, several versions of the tales were "translated" for the court literati before they were embroidered into a singular text. An examination of the process of "translation" casts light on the unmistakable cultural conjunction that

existed at the Ayutthaya port, in which the Melayu *lingua franca* had established itself as a medium of communication. This thesis demonstrates not only the mode of translation but also the possibility of communicative failure, best captured in the Melaka scene of the tales.

In both texts, the Hindu-Buddhist cosmologies are evident. Their "foreign" origins are registered through the evocation of the Melayu tongue and Javanese topological sites; particular features such as disguise and name-change assigned as a Javanese character were also regularly employed. Apparently, these Panji features became a sort of fetish in the early Bangkok court and literary circle. While the Panji tales became a genre of literary production, such obsession was nevertheless subverted in other writings and became a laughable subject. Furthermore, a phantasm of the tales' foreign sounds inspired a new romance featuring the employment of the empty-sign.

Finally, this thesis looks into the role of these romantic tales as a source of categories of meanings in the Thai elite's perception about Java and Indonesia. We start the last chapter with King Chulalongkorn's journeys to the colonial worlds and his search for a model of modernity for his reformation. Eventually, the original objective of these journeys would give way to the King's obsession with the origin of the Panji tales during his last two visits to Java in 1896 and 1901. Arguably, this search for the historical origin of the tales that once existed only in the literary world was inspired, not in the least, by European Orientalist writings. The ancient history of Java associated with the Panji tales was thus able to be emplotted by the Thai.

List of Illustrations and Map

Notes on Orthography and Abbreviation

In general, I have followed the common standard of the Library of Congress and Thai Royal Academy for the transcriptions of Thai names and terms, except particular spellings which have become common in English-Language texts. In the case of proper names, I have referred to transcriptions that have been used in standard bibliographic reference texts and to the styles that have been chosen by authors for their own names when these have appeared in English-language publications.

In note citations, works frequently cited have been identified by the following abbreviations. Thai sources cited in the text are listed in the bibliography by the author's first name. Notes and bibliography follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 594-624.

DL	King Rama I, *Dalang* {1890} (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Somdetphra Srisavarindira Boromrajdevi (H.E. Queen Sawang Watthana), 1956).
INRI	King Rama I, *Botlakhorn ruang Inao* [Inao, a Script for Dancing Performance] {1917} (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Phem Sratthathat, 1966).
INRII	King Rama II, *Inao* {1874, the version used here first published in 1921 by Vajirañana Royal Library, edited by Prince Damrong} (Bangkok: Sinlapa bannakhan, 2003).
NA	National Archive, Bangkok
PCPSWD	*Prachum phongsawadan* (Collected Chronicles). Series of chronicle, started by Prince Damrong. 82 volumes. (Bangkok: 1914-1994).
RTCW	King Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thieo chawa kwa song duean, ro.so.115* [Journal of a Journey to Java of Over the Two Months, 1896] (Bangkok: Sophon phiphat thanakon, 1925).

CHAPTER 1

A Genealogy of Southeast Asian Studies through a Local Optic: An Introduction

On the evening of the celebration of Indonesian independence on 27 December 1949, Saen Thammayot was visiting Java for the first time, probably attached to the Thai diplomatic corps. He noted that after being colonized by the Dutch for three hundred years, civilization had been brought in; industries, sanitation, agriculture, electricity, water-supplies, hospitals, hotels and transportation had been introduced to the "vanishing" nation (*chat 'sueng kamlang ro khwam sun laew'*). The descendants of "Inao-Kurepan" who had slept in darkness for hundreds of year were suddenly awake and were faced with education, the press, the enlightenment (*saeng sawang*), the arrogance of the Aryan race (*khwam ying khong luet arayan*) and the mestizo (*luk khrueng*). Struggling against their enslavement, they had sent their sons to study and get degrees in medicine in The Hague and Amsterdam, the "best place for education" in Europe. It had to be a degree in medicine, because only by being a medical doctor could the Javanese be treated as equal to the Dutch. The ceremony was very simple, however. No great speech as expected, no mass demonstration to celebrate their freedom. In the government hall there was still a large number of Dutch people present. Even though Java and Sumatra had slipped away from their grasp, Flemish power (*maha amnat haeng chao flemmit*) was not easily extinguished. Java was still within the federation and the lives of the people were still deeply bound up with Holland, the Empire.

That night, Saen met Raden Tanyong Kumari, a Javanese woman of noble ancestry who had come to take care of the diplomatic guests, and was invited back to her

house. Jakarta was still fresh from the fighting; here and there still were burnt out buildings and bullet marks. “We won independence, but the freedom-giver (*phu hai*) thought that it had come too soon… while the taker said that it had come much too late (*dai rap cha luea koen*),” said Raden Kumari, “Nevertheless, I am extremely happy today.” The Burmese guest also held the same opinion: “independence is the most precious thing (*ekkarat pen khong phaeng thi sut*).” To celebrate freedom, they drank and danced all night. The next morning, Saen found himself in the same bed with Raden Kumari, naked. Awakened, the Javanese woman whispered to him, “Please stop breathing one day, my dear, for Indonesian independence (*yut hai chai sak nuek wan yot rak phua ekkarat khong indonesia*).” Saen did not know how to respond, and instead made a nonsensical remark: “But you already got independence.” Confusingly, she retorted, “Independence! Ah! My sacrifice! (*ekkara! ah! kan sia sala khong khaphachao!*)… I just sacrificed my virginity (*sing sanguan*) that I have kept for 24 years.” She kept crying and kissing his feet. Eventually, she asked him to close his eyes, bathed his feet and took that water to clean her face. “I come from a royal family, thousands of years old,” she told him. “My ancestors were warriors and kings. They were full of glory and all powerful, until the Dutch came. You should not read Javanese history written by the Dutch. [They] lie. We are ignorant, but their lies haunt us in every thing (*thoe ya an prawattisat chawa thi phuak holanda khian pot kohok… rao ngo tae khao phayayam lok lon rao thuk yang*.”

In this imaginary speech with the locals, composed by a famous French-Indochina educated Thai author and popular historian and first published in the Thai popular

magazine *Sayamsamai* in July 1950,[1] historical writing is suspect. Through a local optic, Southeast Asian history written by the empire is associated with a perpetual lie, a failure to recognize the real meaning of local experience. Unmistakably, the author's utterance is meant to invoke the relevance of history for the local people and, thus, calls for a history written from another angle, a history that is in the service of the locals' interests. Ultimately, my goal here is to raise questions of importance not just for the field, but also for the general public in Thai society. In short, my foremost audience is not the Western academic regime. This study is primarily an exploration of questions on Southeast Asian studies that are relevant for the Thai society's understanding of the region. For instance, how did Thai society perceive the region in the past, and how did such perceptions become influential categories in shaping the Thai relationship to the region at present?

The State of Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand

Thailand's economy in recent decades has structurally changed from a heavy reliance on the agricultural sector to an economy based on industrial products and services by the late 1980s. Before the financial crisis in 1997 the country appeared to be moving towards the status of a newly industrialized country. Concomitant with such changes, Thai society needed a new understanding of its status in the global community and its relations with its neighboring countries also needed readjustment. This was the

[1] So. Thammayot, "Raden Tonyong Kumari," {1950}, reprinted in *Nai huang rak: Rueangrak khong 10 nakpraphan ek* [In the Mood for Love: Love Stories of Ten Great Authors] (Bangkok: Mingmit, 1996), 183-90. The "I" narrator (*khaphachao*) is rendered here as the subject-author himself. In the opening to the story, the "I" narrator was set inseparably from the author who in relating his story has recollected his conversation with the historical figures, Kenneth and Margaret Landon - the former a priest historian and the latter a famous author - at a theatre in Bangkok about Kenneth's new plot of a love story in Java.

vision presented by Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan (1988-1991) in an address in December 1988. He stated, we are living in a world "where the lines dividing friends and adversaries are no longer self-evident or clear-cut, diplomacy has become the art and science of… managing relationships with both friends and adversaries across all issue areas, to ensure that one's interests are protected and enhanced."[2] This emerging new image of neighboring countries was rather different from the conventional perspective that had evolved especially during the communist insurgency. The traditional enemy, Burma, had evidently shifted to become a "friend" and "competitor" and more recently a "shareholder with the same basic values" in mainland Southeast Asia. As Siddhi Savetsila, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced to the Asia Society in New York on 27 September 1985, "in Thailand, we look at Burma as a good neighbor and a traditional friend."[3]

On the one hand, Siddhi was trying to achieve good relations with Southeast Asian countries; on the other, he assumed that Thailand, through its geographical and socio-political location, held a certain measure of authority over the knowledge about its neighboring countries. Both with its cartographical and cosmological location, Thailand is in fact close to having a "true knowledge" of other Southeast Asian countries. He said, "given Thailand's geographical location and close cultural links with the three Indochinese states, Thailand can serve as a funnel for foreign assistance; a bridge linking

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[2] Quoted in Khathrya Um, "Thailand and the Dynamics of Economic and Security Complex in Mainland Southeast Asia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol.13, no.3 (December 1991): 245-270, 245.

[3] Quoted in Tom Kramer, "Thai Foreign Policy Towards Burma, 1987-1993" (M.A. Thesis, Institute of Modern Asian History, Amsterdam University, 1994), 88. On Thai-Burma relations and the discourse on traditional enemy, see Pavin Chachavalpongpun, *A Plastic Nation: the Curse of Thainess in Thai-Burmese Relations* (Maryland: University Press of America, 2005).

the Indochinese states and the global economy and a gateway and springboard for interested foreign investors."[4]

After interrogating the state of Southeast Asian studies in Thailand in 1991, Charnvit Kasetsiri, a former rector of Thammasat University and a prominent Thai historian, said that Thai academic institutes do not pay as much attention to Southeast Asia as an area of study as they should. This situation is very strange because although Thailand is part of the region and has been under the influence of American and Japanese Southeast Asian Studies for a few decades, yet there has been "no serious attempt" on Thailand's part to understand the region. "The Thai government, the elite and academic specialists," said Charnvit, "know very little of the economies, politics, society and culture of its neighbors," not to mention more distant Southeast Asian countries like Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines. However, with the end of the Cold War, the rise of peace in Indochina, and the rapid economic development of Thailand (with the need for more natural resources from neighboring countries), the demand for the area studies of Southeast Asian countries has become "rather urgent."[5]

On 13 November 2000, Sukhumbhand Paribatra, former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Chuan Leekpai government from 1997 to 2001, declared in a special lecture at Thammasat University that during the past ten years there had developed at the government level, at least, a new concept about Thailand's relationship

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[4] Khathrya Um, "Thailand and the Dynamics of Economic and Security Complex in Mainland Southeast Asia," 247.

[5] Charnvit Kasetsiri, "Introduction: Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand," in Charnvit Kasetsiri et al, *Bibliography: Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand* (Bangkok: Thai-Japan Core Universities Program, Kyoto University and Thammasat University, 1991), 1.

with its neighboring countries. Unfortunately, he lamented, the educational system (*rabop kan sueksa*) failed to keep pace with the government's new concept. In Thai universities and academics, "science and knowledge about the politics, governments, economics and societies of [our] neighbors are quite limited. [We have] a lot of historians, but our knowledge about the politics, governments, economics and societies [of our neighbors] is very little."[6]

Dissatisfaction about the state of area studies in Thailand is not just raised by scholars and politicians such as those mentioned above. This concern is quite a normal occurrence among those who are interested in Thai studies. Most Thai scholars apparently concentrate their efforts on the study of Thai history, identity, politics, and so on. Extremely few have crossed the border, so to speak, to study their neighborhood. As Charnvit pointed out in 1991, predominant among the theses written in Thai universities that offer graduate programmes in Southeast Asian Studies, are studies of Thailand's relations with Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma, and so on. "It is almost never the case," said Charnvit, "[for Thai scholars to] study a certain country in its own right, i.e. to understand its politics, society, and culture." When Southeast Asian Studies became "fashionable" among Thai graduate students in the 1960s, "their academic works usually did not cross borders, judging from the M.A. or Ph.D. theses. Instead they became more domestically oriented and more interested in their own society, i.e.,Thailand."[7] The landscape has gradually changed since the turn of century when some Thai M.A. theses

[6] Sukhumbhand Paribatra, "Usakhane, achian, khwamsamkhan khong phumiphaksueksa to prathet thai" [Southeast Asia, ASEAN, and the Importance of Area Studies to Thailand], *Sinlapa Watthanatham*, vol.22, no.10 (August 2001): 78-83.
[7] Charnvit, "Introduction: Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand," 2-3.

exposed themselves to sources in native languages of Southeast Asian countries,[8] and for convenience in conducting their research some students even enrolled and took degrees in universities elsewhere in the region such as, for instance, in Hanoi. Although Charnvit's remark about Ph.D. theses was apparently under-researched, especially in the case of Indonesian studies (see below),[9] it nevertheless deserves a closer look in order to understand the state and nature of Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand.

According to Thongchai Winichakul, a regional concept of Southeast Asia is new to Thai society and the dominant discourses on Southeast Asia in current Thai scholarship are based on a style and a tradition of knowledge inherited from the "imperial discourse of the Thai state."[10] In spite of the fact that Siam/Thailand may have been surrounded by several kingdoms in the past, these political centers have rarely been considered "the regional companions but rather the enemies or dependencies." Within

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[8] See, for example, On-anong Thippimol, "Botbat khabuankarn naksueksa indonesia kab karn sidsud amnat khorng prathanathipbodi suharto" [The Role of Indonesian Student's Movement and the Collapse of President Soeharto's Power] (M.A. thesis, History, Thammasat University, 2003); Thipbodi Buakamsri, "Ekkasan mahaburut khamen: kansueksa ngankhianprawattisat samaimai khong kambucha [Ekasar Mahaburas Khmere: A Study of a Modern Cambodian Historical Writing] (M.A. thesis, History, Chulalongkorn University, 2004); Natthapon Thaichongrak, "Saphap kan damrong chiwit khong chao khamen rawang ph.s. 2518-2522: sueksa 'phumisak' tawan-ok tawantokchiangtai lae tawantokchiangnuea" [Living Conditions of the Khmer During 1975-1979: A Study of the Eastern, Southwestern and Northwestern Zones] (M.A. thesis, History, Chulalongkorn University, 2005).

[9] Apart from Indonesia, there were some Ph.D. theses about other countries in Southeast Asia. For Example, Sud Choncherdsin, "The Indo-Chinese Communist Party in French Cochin China (1936-1940)" (Ph.D. thesis, SOAS, University of London, 1995); Klairung Amratisha, "The Cambodian Novel: A Study of Its Emergence and Development" (Ph.D. thesis, SOAS, University of London, 1998).

[10] Thongchai Winichakul, "Trying to Locate Southeast Asia from Its Navel: Where is Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand?" in *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*, edited by Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt (Singapore: Singapore University Press and Ohio University Press, 2005), 116.

this light, Burma is thus portrayed in the master narrative of Thai national historiography as "a powerful but wicked and vicious enemy," Laos was posited as "a pitiful little sibling," Cambodia as "inferior and untrustworthy," and Melayu as the "distant tributaries." Apparently, said Thongchai, this egocentric "imperial knowledge" has largely "dominated the discourse and knowledge about Southeast Asia in Thai society"[11] and widely inculcated in school textbooks and popular media such as TV serials, films and theaters.[12] In another essay, he proposes that in order to resist the dominant discourse in national historiographies one should write history "at the interstices" – that is, "the history of the locations and moments between being and not being a nation, becoming and not becoming a nation."[13]

Thongchai seems to have overstated the formation of the territorial state of Siam during the late nineteenth century.[14] In fact, interstices or margins are relational concepts. Not only are there many possible and unpredictable forms of resisting dominant discourses but, also, what is supposed to be the dominant and the marginal itself resist specification. Moreover, this Siam/Thailand, to which "imperial knowledge" is ascribed in fact represents a constellation of traditional knowledge that was multi-dimensional.

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[11] Thongchai, "Trying to Locate Southeast Asia from Its Navel," 122-4.
[12] For a discussion of popular history influenced by state's ideology in Thailand, see Patrick Jory, "The King and Us: Representations of Monarchy in Thailand and the Case of *Anna and the King*," *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol.4, no.2 (2001): 201-218; Jiraporn Witayasakpan, "Nationalism and the Transformation of Aesthetic Concepts: Theatre in Thailand during the Phibun Period" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1992).
[13] Thongchai Winichakul, "Writing at the Interstices: Southeast Asian Historians and Postnational Histories in Southeast Asia," in *New Terrains in Southeast Asian History*, edited by Abu Talib Ahmad and Tan Liok Ee (Athens and Singapore: Ohio University Press and Singapore University Press, 2003), 10.
[14] See his *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

The tradition of writing, transcribing, or translating knowledge about its neighboring kingdoms or people can be traced back to the early eighteenth century during the late Ayutthaya period. Apart from the intelligence work by which the Siamese court had tried to keep itself informed of the situation in their neighboring kingdoms and principalities, of which some portions have come down to the historians' hands as "kham hai kan" or testimony,[15] knowledge about these regions was also produced in literary and historical forms. Nidhi Aeusrivongse once suggested that, with the emergence of a reading culture that correlated with a nascent money-economy and an empirical worldview in the early eighteenth century, some foreign stories such as the Javanese Panji and the Persian tales had been introduced into the Thai literary scene since the late Ayutthaya period.[16] During the early Bangkok period, the elite who had lived much of the early part of their lives, and had been educated, during the late Ayutthaya period began to flood the literary circles with various tales both in poetry and in prose forms. Among these were some foreign stories such as *Inao* and *Dalang* (the reproduction of Javanese tales composed or translated during the late Ayutthaya period), *Rachathirat* (the Mon stories of kingship and dynasties), *Samkok* (the Chinese stories of Romance of the Three Kingdoms), and *Saihan* (the Chinese stories about the decline of the Chin dynasty and the founding of the

[15] For example, see Chin Kak's testimony about Bali and Nai Chat's testimony about the situation in Burma after King Mindon had passed away, in *Prachum phongsawadan* [Collected Chronicles], vol.7 (1917). On Chin Kak's testimony, see Elizabeth Graves and Charnvit Kasetsiri, "A Nineteenth-Century Siamese Account of Bali, with Introduction and Notes," *Indonesia*, no.7 (April 1969). See also the testimony of a Burmese military commander who had been appointed governor of Chiang Mai during the Burmese campaign against Ayutthaya in mid 1760s in *Prachum phongsawadan*, vol.14 (1919).
[16] Nidhi Aeusrivongse, *Pakkai lae bairuea: Ruam khwamriang wa duay wannakam lae prawattisat ton ratthanakosin* [Quill and Sail: Collected Essays on Early Bangkok Literature and History] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing, 1984), 64-73.

Han dynasty) and so forth.[17] King Rama I himself was in search of the great Laotian epic, i.e., the *Thaohung thaochuang*, from Lao principalities, albeit the complete translation or reproduction of such into Thai was not accomplished until only recently.[18]

With the influence of these foreign tales, the world was no longer geographically and ethnographically empty, as in Thai traditional tales lacking reference to existing phenomena in nature and among nations. Instead, this world became full of discrete temporal spaces occupied by diverse ethnic groups, kingdoms, and trading ports similar to Ayutthaya and Bangkok. The reading culture of the early Bangkok elite therefore provided fertile ground for the emergence of the most famous tales in the form of poetry that uses the Asian maritime context as its frame, such as the *Phra Apaimani* of Sunthon Phu, composed during the early nineteenth century. In this story, the hero's intelligence network is taking form, and includes the Chinese in some coastal ports, the Cham in southern Vietnam, the Brahman in the South Asia continent, the "Farang" (Westerner) that buried themselves in various port cities of China, Surat, Pahang, Java, Malacca,

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[17] See Kannikar Sartprung, *Rachathirat, samkok lae saihan: lokkathat chonchannam thai* [Rachathirat, Samkok and Saihan: World Views of the Thai Elite] (Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund, 1998); and see also Craig J. Reynolds, "Tycoons and Warlords: Modern Thai Social Formations and Chinese Historical Romance" in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese, A Volume in Honour of Jennifer Cushman*, edited by Anthony Reid (London: Allen & Unwin, 1996).

[18] *Thaohung thaochuang: wiraburut songfang khong* [King Hung and King Chuang: A Culture Hero of the Maekhong River], 2 volumes (Bangkok: Matichon, 2005), vol.2, 450. The Lao script of this work had been transliterated into Thai script during the King Chulalongkorn reign and was finally translated into Thai by Sila Viravong. It was first published in 1943, but not in complete form. Controversy about its origin is still alive, whether it was taken to the Thai kingdom during the late 18th century or during a campaign against the Ho in 1883. For a glimpse of this work, see James R. Chamberlain, "Remarks on the Origins of Thao Hung or Chueang," in *Papers from a Conference on Thai Studies in Honor of William J. Gedney*, edited by Robert J. Bickner, Thomas J. Hudak, and Patcharin Peyasantiwong (Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, The University of Michigan, 1986), 57-90.

Terangganu, Holland, Aceh, Vietnam, Romewisai [Rome or Turkey], Burma, Mon, Germany, Britain, and so forth.[19] Arguably, *Phra apaimani* was the best literary expression of Siamese knowledge about neighboring countries at a crucial time when the old World was breaking down, with the final blow coming from China's defeat in the Opium War (1839-42). Historically, it was written whilst "the western wind was blowing blissfully" (*lom thit tawantok phat chuen ban*)[20] in which the political economy of Siam's knowledge production would be fundamentally re-oriented towards a new focus. After this period, Siam had to adjust itself to accommodate the new environment of world politics.

Being aware of the new political context, the Siamese royal elite tried to take a firm hand over its tributary states, competing with the Western powers to colonize its neighbors. Meanwhile, knowledge production about tributary states and neighboring kingdoms suddenly became flourishing industries. Between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, especially after taking charge of the Vajirañana Royal Library (the State Library),[21] not only produced the official panorama of Thai histories, but also had chronicles and histories of neighboring countries translated, composed and published.[22] The magnum opus of his historical works was an

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[19] Sunthon Phu, *Phra apaimani*, 2 volumes (Bangkok: Khlang Witthaya, 1963), vol.1, 205 and 378-9. See also Klaus Wenk, "Some Remarks about the Life and Works of Sunthon Phu," *Journal of Siam Society*, vol.74 (1986): 169-198.

[20] Chaophraya Thipakorawong, *Phraratphongsawadan krungrattanakosin ratchakanthi 4* [The Dysnatic Chronicle of the Bangkok Era, the Forth Reign] {1934} (Bangkok: Samnakphim tonchabab, 2004), 160-3.

[21] See Patrick Jory, "Books and the Nation: The Making of Thailand's National Library," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, vol.31, no.2 (September 2000): 351-373.

[22] The prominence of this project dealt directly with his writing about the Thai-Burmese warfare. The manuscript ordered to be translated by Damrong has recently been found and published, see Suchit Wongthes ed., *Maharajwong phongsawadan phama*

expansive and practically endless historical series called *Prachum phongsawadan* [Collected Chronicles], which began publication with volume one in 1914 and by 1994 had run to volume 82. In this series, historical texts about Southeast Asia were published regularly, including chronicles of Cambodia, Burma, Laos and its principalities, Kedah, Terangganu, Kelantan, Vietnam, etc. In the meantime, at least two works were published privately by Prince Worawannakon (Kromphra Narathip Prapanphong): *Phongsawadan phama* [Chronicle of Burma] and *Phongsawadan thaiyai* [Chronicle of Shan].[23] Moreover, the tradition of publishing chronicles of neighboring countries in *Prachum Phongsawadan* remained alive even after the 1932 revolution when the absolute monarchy was brought down and Damrong himself had to go into exile in Penang a few years later. Despite his exile, Damrong produced two more travelogues about Burma and Cambodia, i.e., *Nirat nakhon wat* [Voyage to Angor Wat] (1936) and *Thieao mueang phama* [Voyage to Burma] (1946).[24]

Some of the abovementioned chronicles, such as the chronicles of Lai, Thaeng, Huaphan, Chiang Khaeng, Chiang Rung, were apparently composed during the Siamese campaigns in these territories. Other chronicles, i.e., Cambodia, Luang Prabang, Wiang Chan, Kedah, Terangganu and Kelantan, were about those former tributary states of Siam that were recognized as having been lost to the colonial powers. But the chronicles of Vietnam and Burma were published at a time when these kingdoms had already fallen to

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[Maharajvong, the Burmese Chronicle], translated by Nai To (Bangkok: Matichon, 2002).

[23] Prince Worawannakon, *Phongsawadan phama* [Chronicle of Burma] (Bangkok: Krungthep Dailymail, 1913); *Phongsawadan thaiyai* [Chronicle of Shan] (n.d., 1914).

[24] Prince Damrong, *Nirat nakhon wat* [Voyage to Angor Wat] (Bangkok: Rongphim Sophonphiphatthanakorn, 1936) and *Thieo muang phama* [Voyage to Burma] (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Chaophraya Pichaiyat, 1946).

the colonial power. It is not clear that these "studies" were produced within a framework of "imperial knowledge," even if some were produced at time when the sovereignty over these territories was in dispute between Siam and France or Britain. It might be viewed rather within a tradition of "kham hai kan" [testimony], or a sort of intelligence report that Siam required about the situation in the surrounding areas during the high tide of colonization within the region. Moreover, some of these chronicles were apparently not written from Bangkok's point of view, but were rather compilations of interviews from the local elites and the ruling class that mainly provided basic information about the political structure and situation of their kingdoms or principalities, or else just a translation of their chronicles.

With such facts at hand, Siam could therefore negotiate or substantiate, to some extent, its claim over ambiguous territories that were disputed with the western powers. However, this tradition of knowledge production about the region was like the last brightly burning flame. Since Western power, knowledge and technologies were undisputedly overwhelming, Siam did not feel it necessary to pursue knowledge about the surrounding regions that had already fallen to the Western grip. The Siamese intelligentsia looked instead to the West, and to its knowledge, culture, technologies, and so forth. In Charnvit's words, "with the presence of colonial powers the 'natives' looked to the 'motherlands' of London, Paris, the Hague, or Washington D.C."[25] Although some reports about the region were still written during this time, such as, for example, the special report about the progress of medical practice implemented by the American

[25] Charnvit, "Introduction: Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand," 2.

colonial power in Manila in 1904,[26] and the *Raingan chawa samai ro.5* (Report on Java),[27] these were about the regional transformations dictated by the direct implementation of Western knowledge and systems.

According to conventional assessments about Siam/Thailand after its reorientation towards a new order, formal studies about the surrounding region became extremely rare. But this might be a biased perception, produced in the light of the academic, institutional definition and scope of Southeast Asian Studies. As Thongchai suggests, much of the knowledge produced was not the contribution of universities or knowledge institutions, but "local knowledge."[28] From a "local knowledge" framework, one can identify numerous writings about Southeast Asia that have been produced by a number of prolific authors, i.e., Bunchuai Srisawat, Kukrit Pramoj, Wilat Maniwat, Suchit Wongthet, Thiraphap Lohitthakun, and so on. Among these authors some were politicians, some were journalists, and some were both as in the case of Kukrit. Until today, Bunchuai's works are still a remarkable landmark of ethnic studies in Thailand.[29] Meanwhile, Kukrit Pramoj, the director of Siam Rath Daily and the Prime Minister (1975-6), was an extremely popular and prolific writer and was once a full professor at Thammasat University. He wrote on a wide range of topics, both fiction and non-fiction, and regularly published works about the region such as Cambodia, the Vietnam War, the

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[26] See Davisakd Puaksom, "Of Germs, Public Hygiene, and the Healthy Body: the Making of the Medicalizing State in Thailand," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.66, no.2 (May 2007): 311-44.
[27] Charnvit Kasetsiri (ed.), *Raingan chawa samai ro.5* [Java: 1907 Siamese Report on Java] (Bangkok: Toyota Thailand Foundation, 2003).
[28] Thongchai Winichakul, "Trying to Locate Southeast Asia from Its Navel," 124-6.
[29] Bunchuai Srisawat, *30 chat nai chaing rai* [30 Ethnic groups in Chiang Ria] (Bangkok: Ruamsarn, 1953); *Chao khao nai thai* [Mountainous People in Thailand] (Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1963); and *Thai sipsorng panna* [The Highland People in Chiang Mai] (Bangkok: Rongphim Ramphim, 1957).

American role in Southeast Asia, Burma, Sihanouk, Soekarto, Malaysia, and so forth.[30] Wilat Maniwat, another popular writer and journalist, also published regularly on prominent Southeast Asian figures such as Soekarno, Ho Chi Minh, and Soeharto.[31] Political figures in Southeast Asia were certainly attractive to the Thai public readership which was eager to know more about Soekarno, Soeharto, Aung San or Aung San Suu Kyi, Ho Chi Minh, Sihanouk, Pol Pot, Prince Phetcharat, Marcos, and so on.[32]

The demand for knowledge about Southeast Asia was relatively high, especially during the Vietnam War and those turbulent years in Cambodia in which books about this region, either serious or popular, flooded the pocketbook market.[33] The conflicts and crises in Indochina have had a large impact on the academic economy because of political changes within the region; and it is evident that most of these works aimed to supply the public's thirst about the situation. Meanwhile, books about political upheavals in other countries within the region that have relatively less impact on Thailand, such as, for example, the Philippines or Indonesia, were rare indeed or limited to a few specialists.

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[30] For example, *Songkhram wietnam* [Vietnam War] (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1968); *Amerika nai achia akhane* [America in Southeast Asia] (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1968); *Sathankan rob ban rao* [Situation Around Our Home] (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1969); *Khamen-Sihanu, Chava-Sukano* [Cambodia-Sihanouk, Java-Soekarno] (1970); *Malayu ram krit* [Malay Danced the Kris] (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1972).

[31] Wilat Maniwat, *Sukano* [Soekarno] (Bangkok: Khlangwitthaya, 1971); *Lung ho* [Uncle Ho Cih Min] 4th printing (Bangkok: Dokya, 2001); *Chiwit phitsadan ong san chu chi* [Life of Aung San Suu Kyi] (Bangkok: Dokya, 1997); *Chiwit phitsawan suhato* [Queer Life of Soeharto] (Bangkok: Dokya, 1998).

[32] One remarkable work about Southeast Asia published after the student movement in 1973 was a collection of biographies of Asian leaders, e.g., Soekarno, Sihanouk, Aung San, Gandhi, Rizal, Mao Tse Tung, and Ho Chi Minh. It was published in 1974 by the radical journal *Sangkhomsart parithat* [Social Science Review] and was banned after the 1976 incident. See Suchat Swatsi and Charnvit Kasetsiri (eds.), *Wirachon achia* [Asian Heroes], {1974} 2nd edition (Bangkok: 5 Area Studies Project, 2002).

[33] See the bibliography of books about Indochina in Charnvit et al, *Bibliography: Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand*.

We can, thus, safely assume that the political economy of knowledge production about Southeast Asia in Thailand was rather governed by a certain market economy logic that depended largely on a popular readership's demand rather than being dictated by the national interest or a state's funding academy. This is arguably the case even with the Philippines since one of the first monographs about that country written in Thai was intended to respond to speculation about rising demand from the market: Thai society was then showing ever greater interest in the Philippines as a member of the SEATO treaty and as a favorite destination of Thai students.[34] Undoubtedly, that market was directly generated by the political alliance with the Free World of Thailand's postwar government that led to an influx of foreign aid to help develop the country in order to cope with a resurgent communist movement. As part of the development project, a large number of students and government officials were sent abroad for study and training, both in the US and its colony. Though the Philippines was popular among the Bangkok middle class as a place to send their sons to study before the war,[35] it was the anti-communist alliance that turned the archipelagic republic into a representation of freedom and development for the image consumption and training of Thai officials. At the end of the 1960s, there were about 1,400 students studying in the Philippines.[36]

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[34] Cho. Chotiphan, *Prawatsat kanpokkhrong lae kanmueng khong satharanarat haeng filippin* [History, Government, and Politics of the Republic of the Philippines] (Bangkok: Phraephitthaya, 1969), preface. Notably, the reader was informed that its framework and contents were taken exclusively from Teodoro A. Agoncillo's *Philippine History* (1966) and Gregorio F. Zaide's *Philippine Government* (1965).

[35] See Wit Sutthasathian, *Trawen manila* [Touring the Manila], first published in 1943 and reprinted in Kampanat Phlangkun (ed.), *Anuson ngan men wit sutthasathian* [Cremation Volume of Wit Sutthasathian] (Bangkok: Dansuttha, 1990).

[36] Cho. Chotiphan, *Prawatsat kanpokkhrong lae kanmueng khong satharanarat haeng filippin*, 589.

Re-orienting Southeast Asian studies in Thailand

Charnvit once made a wily comment that Thai academics are in fact similar to a caricature that Taufik Abdullah had once applied to Indonesian academics: i.e., "a satu pisang," a banana tree that gives fruit once and dies. Though they were "potential Southeast Asianists," said Charnvit, "they must feel the need, the urgency, and relevancy of working on their own country."[37] Though it seems that Charnvit has a particular academic in mind, the real issue is not individual lack but rather the limited institutional effort to understand Southeast Asia, even though there was a pressing demand both by the public and the national interest to deal with the great range of problems that came with political changes and crises in the region.

Obviously, there is no long-term policy in formulating a strategic plan to institutionalize research schemes about the region. Most Southeast Asian studies programmes were established at the university level rather than through a government's strategic policy. The only viable research institute, i.e., the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, that might associate itself with the state's foreign policy about the region was oriented instead towards China and East Asia. Scholarships for post-graduate studies were allocated mainly not by the Thai government's agency, but by Japan, the US, Australia, and other outside bodies.

My intention here, however, is not to interrogate the institutional development of Southeast Asian Studies that has yet to fully unfold. Instead, it tries to show how the problems of knowing Southeast Asia in the present can be traced back to the poverty of that knowledge from the very beginning – in the sense that it is insufficient and does not

[37] Charnvit, "Overview of Research and Studies on Southeast Asia in Thailand," 18-20.

provide a meaningful or relevant basis for Thai society to understand the region, because these "potential Southeast Asianists" produced their works not in response to queries from Thai society and its necessities, but instead to questions formulated within a Western academic landscape and its interests. When Thai scholars came back home, questions enthusiastically posed in their dissertations could barely capture the interest of Thai academic circles, whose concerns were elsewhere. Their earlier attempts, therefore, could not be nurtured and cultivated within the Thai context.[38]

Seemingly, this would be the case with Nidhi Aeusrivongse. After having spent some years at the University of Michigan in the early 1970s, where he learned Bahasa Indonesia and Dutch, Nidhi wrote a thesis about the emergence of the Indonesian novel and how this shaped the cultural aspect of Indonesian nationhood in the pre-war period.[39] Once he returned home in 1976, Thai society was in the middle of a highly charged debate over political ideologies, the student movement, the communist resurgence, and especially the assessment of Thai historiography following the student movement in October 1973.[40] Engaged himself in a heated discussion involving a Marxist emplotment of historical process and the political development of Thailand, Nidhi chose instead to speak to a wider public and to revolutionary elements. Since then, he has published a

[38] For a substantial critique of Indonesian studies, see Simon Philpott, *Rethinking Indonesia: Postcolonial Theory, Authoritarianism and Identity* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000).
[39] Nidhi Aeusrivongse, "Fiction as History: A Study of Pre-War Indonesian Novels and Novelists (1920-1942)" (Ph.D. dissertation, History, University of Michigan, 1976).
[40] See Thongchai Winichakul, "The Changing Landscape of the Past: New Histories in Thailand since 1973," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, vol.26, no.1 (March 1995): 99-120.

series of influential studies on Thai history.[41] Nidhi never published anything on Indonesia, the focus of his Michigan PhD thesis.

Apart from our own social concerns and political engagement, there is something else working inside this epistemological enterprise. It is arguable that Indonesian Studies has been dominated by the Western academic literature, a situation which Ariel Heryanto once acutely deplored: Southeast Asians, he wrote, "are central to the operation and existence of Southeast Asian studies, and yet they have always occupied a subordinate or inferior position within the production and consumption of this enterprise."[42] My intention, however, is not to overthrow the yoke of a purportedly Western intellectual regime and substitute it with a Southeast Asian hegemony.[43] Here I move beyond Peter Jackson's prescription in his rescuing area studies project aimed at resisting the intellectual hegemony of "an alliance between poststructuralism and conservative accounts of globalization."[44] Jackson calls for a "multidimensional spatiality" that

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[41] For example, Nidhi Aeusrivongse, *Pakkai lae bairuea: ruam khwamriang wa duai wannakam lae prawatsat ton ratthanakosin* [Quill and Sail: Collected Essays on Early Bangkok Literature and History] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing, 1984); for an English version, see Nidhi Eoseewong, *Pen & Sail: Literature and History in Early Bangkok*, edited by Chris Baker and Ben Anderson (Chiang Mai: Silkworm, 2005).

[42] Ariel Heryanto, "Can There Be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies?" *Moussons*, vol.5 (2002): 3-30, 5.

[43] For a sake of clarity, perhaps it needs to sate that I am aware that the West is not a monolitihic category. When the Missionaries had discursively attempted to bind the civilizational and material progress with Christianity in the nineteenth century, Thai elites argued that it needs to separate between the material world and the spiritual world. Though Siam was yet backward in term of material progress, but in term of the spiritual world Buddhism is more rational than the Christianity. I have discussed about the "orientalizing" of the Occidental at some lengths in Davisakd Puaksom, "Kan praptua thang kwamru kwam ching lae amnat khong chonchannam sayam ph.s.2325-2411" [The Readjustment of Knowledge, Truth, and Power of the Elites in Siam, 1782-1868] (MA thesis, Department of History, Chulalongkorn University, 1997).

[44] Peter Jackson, "Space, Theory, and Hegemony: The Dual Crises of Asian Area Studies and Cultural Studies." *SOJOURN*, vol.18, no.1 (2003): 1-41, 6. For a critique of

registers not just a "*difference between* geographically delimited discursive systems, cultures, and regimes of power," but is sensitive also to a "*difference within.*"[45] For a native academic, attempting to posit oneself in Southeast Asian studies other than one's own native country, the situation is even more complex. The task is not only to cope with a critique of poststructuralists or globalization theorists that "might appear to leave area studies as a politically incorrect, old-fashioned (pre-globalization) and theoretically naïve (empirical) enterprise,"[46] because responding solely within the field or within the Western epistemological regime would unavoidably render the task obsolete for one's own society and, perhaps, national interests. It was seemingly pointless, for example, for Withaya Sucharithanarugse, writing under the shadow of Herb Feith's *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (1962), to try to understand the failure of the functional rationality of the Indonesian bureaucratic system while the Thai public intellectual movement was enthusiastically searching for a justification to overthrow altogether the democratic system and the traditional political structure.[47]

Southeast Asian studies in a Southeast Asian country such as Thailand at present is, thus, charged with a double task. On the one hand, it has to resist the intellectual hegemony of the West in order to survive; on the other, it has to reflect upon itself carefully in the light of the country's knowledge economy. As the Nidhi generation has

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Jackson's project, see Rommel A. Curaming, "Towards a Poststructuralist Southeast Asian Studies?" *SOJOURN*, vol.21, no.1 (2006): 90-112.

[45] Jackson, "Space, Theory, and Hegemony," 6; original emphasis.

[46] Jackson, "Space, Theory, and Hegemony," 2.

[47] Withaya Sucharithanarugse, "Indonesian Regional Administration in a Period of Intensified Development Activity, 1969-1976: Case Studies in Three Kabupatens of Central Java" (Ph.D. thesis, Politics, Monash University, 1979). For a critique of Herb Feith's approach, see also Harry J. Benda, "Democracy in Indonesia," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.23, no.3 (May 1964): 449-456.

shown, Southeast Asian studies in Southeast Asia and Thailand in particular could not be separated from the social concerns and political developments within one's own nation. If it can be constructed upon a different epistemological foundation altogether, one reaching back in time to the mediating influences drawn from a crosshatch of Southeast Asian cultures that could encompass the region,[48] perhaps then it can become meaningful to wider audiences or become a medium through which the subject matter could be understood or the academic voice be heard.

In order to achieve this, Southeast Asian studies needs to overcome the burden of "Eurocentric histories" that "remains a shared problem across geographical boundaries."[49] For Dipesh Chakrabarty,

> These statements [that embrace the entirety of humanity produced by Western philosophers and thinkers] have been produced in relative, and sometimes absolute, ignorance of the majority of humankind – that is, those living in non-Western cultures… The everyday paradox of third-world social science is that we find these theories, in spite of their inherent ignorance of 'us,' eminently useful in understanding our societies.[50]

If we are truly determined to think through how this Eurocentric knowledge production and consumption could seriously affect Thai society, we should, firstly, try to find an opening through which we can engage with the circulation of knowledge about Indonesia from within the Thai perceived world. Depending solely on the intervention of the

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[48] The very idea that I use to describe the Panji tales as a crosshatch of Southeast Asian cultural conjunction, which is elaborated in Chapter 3, is adopted from Craig Reynolds' description of a mid-nineteenth century seditious literary text, *Nirat Nongkhai* as "a crosshatch of discourses, the one displaying and celebrating the benefits of benevolent authority, the other demonstrating and criticizing despotic decisions." See Craig J. Reynolds, *Seditious Histories: Contesting Thai and Southeast Asian Pasts* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, in association with SUP, 2006), 92.
[49] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 17.
[50] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 29.

Western episteme would not seem to be adequate. Only by articulating from a certain position whatever we can retain from our own utterance and from a discursive crosshatch of Southeast Asian cultural conjunctions, can Southeast Asian studies in Thailand embed itself within Thai society. Otherwise, the project is most likely doomed to fail since it cannot resist the criticism that is bound to come from the bearers of the hegemonic discourse but, also, is not even relevant to one's own location of academic practices. Studying Indonesia, for a Thai academic – albeit contemporarily based in Singapore,[51] therefore trenchantly invokes the relevance of one own work within the political economy of the Thai academic landscape in which social concerns, political developments and one's own theoretical engagement clash and are negotiated.

In order to overcome the difficulties identified above in attempting to delineate a problem in Indonesian studies from within a Thai idiom of experience, it is tempting to argue that a crosshatch of Southeast Asian traditions such as the Panji tales could be very useful as a preliminary "bridge" between both traditions. If there are some things that Thai society could think about pertaining to Indonesia, then *Inao* is definitely paramount among them. *Inao* is a Thai version of the Javanese Panji tales that were highly popular not only in Java, but also throughout the Melayu world. In the 18th Century Ayutthaya and early Bangkok, there were at least two versions of Panji in Thai literature: *Dalang* and *Inao*. The latter version, especially the version composed by King Rama II, was

[51] I myself was amazed and shocked that when I first went to Pattani in 1997, since I who was born in the South could not even understand a word of my friend's mother. It is a bit like entering into a foreign space. I attempted to figure out how my friend would feel during his several years studying and living in Bangkok. I wonder whether he ever dreamt in Thai. It was not until I went abroad to Indonesia to study the Bahasa that I am able to talk with his family whom the Thai state assumed as their citizens.

highly celebrated within literary circles and was reproduced many times in different versions since the Thonburi and early Bangkok period. Although originating in Java, the story of *Inao* was read, and formerly chanted, by Thai students since primary school, as one example of the best in Thai classical literature.

This thesis argues that an alternative knowledge foundation to the Western-dominated understanding of Indonesia as lamented by Heryanto could be built upon the bedrock of Thai perceptions about Indonesia, which is profoundly shaped by a long tradition of representing the Javanese tales. Most likely, "Java" to the Thai is a logo of pattern recognition comprising several components registered as Javanese elements,[52] an example of what Chakrabarthy calls a "hyperreal" term that refers to "certain figures of imagination whose geographical referents remain somewhat indeterminate."[53] Thai society is replete with instances in which Indonesia was subsumed into such a term as "Java," by mobilizing "devices of collective memory that were both antihistorical and nonmodern."[54] Most of the Thai knowledge about Indonesia was mediated through the Panji stories, to the point that *Inao* is analogous to a prism through which Thai society views Indonesia and Java. In other word, *Inao* is definitely a source of categories of meaning. It is a persistent memory that resists substitution by another. When King Chulalongkorn (r.1868-1910) paid his second visit to the Dutch East Indies in 1896 in which he also visited the Yogyakarta and Surakarta courts, apart from his survey of the administration of the colonial government the king was on a quest for an historical

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[52] For a discussion of logo that was used in advertising industries to evoke a "pattern recognition" of certain meanings or values represented in commodities, see, for example, Pracha Suwiranon, *Disai + Kunchoe* [Design + Culture] (Bangkok: Sameskybooks, 2008), 4-9.
[53] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 27.
[54] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 40.

account of Inao. Even a few years ago, a prominent Thai journalist published his book on the political biography of General Soeharto with an astonishing title for those who are not familiar with the Thai context, perhaps even the Indonesian themselves: *Suhato: inao khongkraphan phu thathai lok* (Soeharto: the invulnerable Inao who challenges the world).[55] Regularly, news about Indonesia found in Thai newspapers relates the country to *Inao*. For example, the general election in Indonesia in 2004 was phrased in a leading Thai newspaper as "kan lueak thang inao" (literally general election in the Inao's land).[56]

The unchanging Indonesian past that the Thai tend to project onto the present is actually drawn from the time of a pre-Islamic Javanese Indonesia. In Thai scholarship, there is no serious work written about Islamic-influenced Javanese society or Indonesia at the present, even though the story of Inao entered Thai society during the late 17th or early 18th century, when most of Javanese society had already converted to Islam. It is still an open field for discussion, for example, whether Panji stories were highly encoded with Javanese culture, or the "Javanese" elements represented in Thai versions were in fact largely interpolated with Thai cultural elements, and so on. Pre-Islamic Indonesia was, therefore, the dominant perceptual grid through which Thai society came to know about Indonesia.

Whereas earlier studies of the Thai Panji stories often focus on the similarities and differences between the Thai and other Panji versions, e.g., the Melayu and the Javanese versions,[57] there has been very little effort to shed light on how these Javanese stories

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[55] Pichian Khurathorng, *Suhato: Inao khongkraphan phu thathai lok* [Soeharto: the invulnerable Inao who challenges the world] (Bangkok: Matichon, 1998).
[56] *Matichon*, 21 September 2004.
[57] Prince Dhaninivat, "Wichan rueang nithan panyi rue inao" [Origin and Venue of the Siamese Tale of Inao], first published in 1941, reprinted in *Chumnum niphon khong*

were disseminated or translated into Thai. Though there have been some attempts to argue that the Thai Panji stories originated from the Melayu version used by the Melayu community in Ayutthaya, e.g., the prisoners of war from Patani, such speculation is not convincing and lacks authentic facts and arguments. One of the most attractive attempts at accounting for the origins of the *Inao*, however, discusses the Melayu lexical elements in Thai society drawing especially on the Thai Panji stories.[58]

Some points I develop in this study are: Firstly, the Javanese tales that circulated in Thai society in eighteenth century Ayutthaya were framed in the "Hindu-Buddhist Javanese" context, and this image became a prism for the Thai understanding or perception about Indonesia in the present. This also explains the Thai ignorance about the Muslim element in Indonesia and the lack of understanding about the Muslim world in general. One explanation for this state of ignorance might be the fact that they have not been subjected to a "genuinely felt and experienced force"[59] exerted by the Melayu world since the latter half of nineteenth century, or even before.

Secondly, I try to show that when the Thai Panji versions were composed around the middle of the eighteenth century at the Ayutthaya trading port, the Melayu language was evidently used as a medium of communication among the merchants of various nations. The existence of untranslated Javanese and Melayu terms might suggest that these stories encrypted a remarkable moment of cultural conjunction between Thai society and the Javanese and the Melayu worlds. Rather than trying to prove that the

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krommuen phitthayalappruettiyakon [Collected Articles by Prince Dhaninivat] (Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1964).

[58] Titima Suthiwan, "Malay Lexical Elements in Thai" (Ph.D. dissertation, Linguistics, University of Hawaii, 1997).

[59] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 208.

Thai's Panji stories came from the Melayu version, I argue that Melayu was utilized as a medium of translation. Though there remains a question regarding the modes of translation, the persistence of Javanese and Melayu lexical elements resulting from this cultural exchange implies that the medium of exchange was not adequate and the exchange not yet completed. The untranslated terms were, thus, left behind as the remnant of the moment of exchange in which economic commodities and cultural elements were bargained, bartered, and traded through the medium of Melayu. In fact, Melayu as a lingua franca was not only used in the Southeast Asian maritime world, but even at the Ayutthaya court in its contractual relations with the Melayu and the rest of the maritime Muslim world. My project here is also to write a history of trans-cultural communication that connected various parts of the Southeast Asian world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Thirdly, I would like to present a general picture of how the Panji stories had come to influence Thai perceptions about Indonesia and Java, especially among the elite during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These influences would be drawn firstly from the literary tradition of grafting various versions of Panji tales to the two main versions. These two texts that had become canonized not only were much praised for their charm and beauty, but they also became instantly translated into other art forms such as dance performance and mural paintings. During the early nineteenth century, however, elements of these texts were redeployed as subversive elements within the literary tradition and the anxiety of communicative failure owing to its many foreign-sounding words had also turned the "Javanese" signifiers into what James Siegel would

call “an empty sign.”[60] My usage of the term here is, however, different from Siegel. In his discussion about Isaac Groneman’s 1887 description of the public display of the criminal hangings in the nineteen century Indies, Siegel said that “If we extend Groneman’s thoughts about spectators, we can say that spectators imagined themselves on the gallows as though the disappearance of the ones they saw did not leave a gap, an empty sign.” For Siegel, the hanging person was not only represented as a criminal, but as “the sign of the person” in which any native spectator could imagine himself substitutable in the gallows place. Nevertheless, the “empty sign” that came from imitating Javanese sounds, apart from generating a foreign atmosphere, has no signified any specific referent. In short, it was a sign of a foreign sound’s sign system.

In the latter part of this thesis, I attempt to show how this literary tradition had affected the royal elite and became the prism through which they looked to Java. During their voyages to the Dutch East Indies, they would search for the origins of Panji, make comparisons between the tales and what they actually saw, and even emplot Javanese ancient history through them. Finally, apart from the influence of the Panji tales in which the Islamic element is peripheral, I would argue that the “Hindu-Buddhist” frame of Thai Royal perceptions of Java was very much influenced by Orientalist studies on Java written by influential figures such as Thomas Stamford Raffles. These Orientalists, however, had in fact drawn from a similar source of categories of meanings, i.e., the Panji tales.

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[60] James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (Princeton and New Jersey: University of Princeton Press, 1997), 47.

CHAPTER 2

A "Panji Civilization" and a Fragmented Reading of the Thai Panji Stories

In order to posit an alternative knowledge foundation to the Western intellectual tradition, I argue that the bedrock of the Thai perceived world of Java and Indonesia was founded on the Panji tales, namely, *Inao* and *Dalang* as they were called in Thai versions. The popular version, *Inao*, was highly influential in Thai literary tradition and dance performance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a source of images representing Java in the traditional epistemic landscape, *Inao* became a source of categories of meanings in the Thai understanding of Indonesia. In this chapter, we examine the Thai versions of the Panji tales in order to lay the groundwork for further explorations into frameworks of knowledge.

To introduce the reader to the flavor of this "Javanese" romance, I shall first glance briefly at the influence of Panji tales on the literary traditions of Java, primarily, and also of Melayu and other cultural centers in Southeast Asia such as Burma and Cambodia.[1] The main portion of this chapter will discuss the Thai Panji manuscripts and offer a fragmented reading of the popular version, *Inao.*

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[1] Since there is the vast literature on Panji tales in Southeast Asia and owing to my own limitations in accessing these languages, I can only afford a brief summary. For the serious readers, they can consult, for example, a classical study of the Panji tales from a Javanese manuscript in Stuart O. Robson, *Wangbang Wideya: A Javanese Panji Romance* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971); a general discussion of the Panji tales in the Melayu literary tradition in Vladimir Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature: A Historical Survey of Genres, Writings and Literary Views* (Leiden and Singapore: KITLV and ISEAS, 2004), 119-75; and, recently, a study of the Balinese Panji text and dance performance in Adrian Vickers, *Journeys of Desire: A Study of the Balinese Text Malat* (Leiden: KITLV, 2005).

"A Panji Civilization in Southeast Asia"

Intrigued with images of endless journeys and "constant battle and conquest" in the Panji romances, Adrian Vickers suggests that such elements share a common praxis of political culture in the region, which he calls "a Panji civilization in Southeast Asia." That is, it represents a dynamic process in which "kingdoms are fluid entities, names for constellations of allegiance and loyalty, rather than fixed and bounded entities."[2] Apart from drawing from a common political culture, the Panji tales' great popularity throughout the region is self-evident.

Believed to be a romance of Javanese origin, the earliest firmly dated evidence of Panji stories is the Gambyok stone relief at Kediri in eastern Java "depicting a Panji scene and an image of Panji dated A.D. 1413."[3] According to W.F. Stutterheim, the Gambyok relief probably featured Panji and his four escorts taking a rest deep amidst the forest, but it is not clear which context or narration it was drawn from because a similar scene could be found throughout the Panji variations.[4]

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[2] Vickers, *Journeys of Desire*, 14.

[3] Richard Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 53-4.

[4] W.J. Stutterheim, "Enkele Interessante Reliefs van Oost Java," *Djawa*, Vol.17 (1935): 130-144. Stutterheim wrote that "Barangkali pertemuan antara Pandji dengan panakawannja jang sedang beristirahat dalam hutan, serta keempat orang kadejannya: Djurudeh, Punta, Persanta dan Kertala....Tapi pertemuan sematjam itu sering tertjadi dan oleh karena jang muntjul selalu orang-orang jang itu djuga, djika dapat ditentukkan, pertemuan mana jang dilukiskan disini, djika tidak ada sesuatu bantuan keteranggan." Quoted and translated into Indonesian in R.M.Ng. Poerbatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji Dalam Perbandingan* [The Panji Stories in Comparison], translated by Zuber Usman and H.B. Jassin (Djakarta: Gunung Agung, 1968), 406-8. (Original Dutch edition: *Pandji-verhalen onderling vergeleken*, Bandung, 1940).

Illustration 1: Panji scene of the Gambyok relief, Kediri, East Java
Picture from W.J. Stutterheim, "Enkele Interessante Reliefs van Oost Java" (1935).

Nonetheless, Vladimir Braginsky asserts that the scene is drawn from "the moment when he [Panji] consults his brothers and servants, intending to take his first beloved Ken Mertalangu to his palace under the cover of night."[5] However, an earlier but "more circumstantial" Panji evidence was the reliefs of the Candi Jawi that was built in the 1290s and restored in 1332, thereby the reliefs could possibly come from either of those dates.[6] Apart from these, there are also the four-scene reliefs at the Candi Kendalisodo, East Java, a sanctuary for worship and meditation, which was also dated by W.F. Stutterheim to around the middle of the fifteenth century and believed to feature the story of Panji Jayakusuma, the most popular Panji version in Java.[7]

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[5] Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 156.
[6] Ann R. Kinney, *Worshiping Siva and Buddha: The Temple Art of East Java* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 127-37.
[7] Lydia Kieven, "Arjuna, Bhima and Panji: Three Heroes at Candi Kendalisodo," in *Narrative Sculpture and Literary Traditions in South and Southeast Asia*, edited by

Illustration 2: A Bas Relief at the Candi Kendalisodo, East Java,
Picture from *Narrative Sculpture and Literary Traditions in South and Southeast Asia*,
Edited by Marijke J. Klokke, Plate No.35.

From a literary standpoint, the Panji plot can be briefly summarised as follows: The story is always related to the two main kingdoms in Java, Kuripan and Daha, in which the Kuripan prince is betrothed to the Daha princess from an early age. Before they can marry, a complicating factor (or series of factors) intervenes such as, for instance, the princess being lost. Having to solve this problem, the prince and the main protagonist have to disguise themselves, change their names, and take a journey along which they sometimes have to wage war and reduce many other kingdoms to vassalage. After overcoming many such obstacles, the prince discloses his real identity and, finally,

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Marijke J. Klokke (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 2000), 42-50, illustrations in plate number 33-36. For a summary of this Panji version from another manuscript, see Siti Barorh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara* [Panji: Image of the Archipelagic Hero] (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1987), 23-35.

reclaims the beauty. With their nuptial ceremony, the Javanese world returns to its state of happiness and prosperity.[8]

The Panji tales have been subjected to multiple textual readings which can stand on their own. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the tales are extremely dynamic and thus are able to cross the borders of the literary text. As a result, they have become a space for the constellation of artistic performances of various genres, ranging from court dance performance to popular theatre, painting, and even the mass media. For instance, the puppeteer of Wayang Beber from Wonosari, central Java, believes that his drawings on the folded paper Wayang have featured the Panji tale since the Majapahit period.[9] In Bali, apart from well known Panji texts such as the *Kidung Panji (a)Malat Rasmi*, their influence in court dance performance and painting is massive, as recently demonstrated in one of the most penetrating and colorful studies about the Panji tales, Adrian Vickers' *Journeys of Desire: A Study of the Balinese Text Malat*.[10] In the observation of one Melayu literary student, the Melayu Panji romances were regularly "composed directly by Malay authors and *dalang*," and very often claimed that they had been translated from the Javanese manuscript.[11]

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[8] Stuart O. Robson, *Wangbang Wideya: A Javanese Panji Romance* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 12-3; and see his "Panji and Inao: Questions of Textual and Cultural History," *Journal of the Siam Society* vol.84, no.2 (1996): 39-53.
[9] Bagyo Suharyono, *Wayang Beber Wonosari* [The Wayang Beber of Wonosari] (Wonogiri: Bina Citra Pustaka, 2005). An anonymous reader informs me that there is a significant documentation of the Wayang Beber in Kant-Achilles, Mally, Fredich Seltmann and Rüdiger Schumacher, *Wayang Beber. Das wiederentdechkte Bildrollen-Drama Zentral-Javas* (Stutgart: Franz Steiner, 1990).
[10] Adrian Vickers, *Journeys of Desire: A Study of the Balinese Text Malat* (Leiden: KITLV, 2005).
[11] Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 159.

There are many hypotheses about the nature, origin, and meaning of the Panji tales. Early in the twentieth century Raden Mas Ngabehi Poerbatjaraka, a Leiden-educated Javanese scholar who was later known as the pioneer of literary study in Indonesia, suggested that Kiranaratu of Janggala, mentioned in the *kakawin* Smaradahana, is the figure of Candrakirana, whereas her husband, king Kameswara of Dahanarajya, is identified with Kameswara I of Kediri (A.D. 1117-1130).[12] However, some scholars, such as for example P.V. van Stein Callenfels, regard the powerful eleventh century king, Erlangga, as "Panji's prototype," especially after Buchari's epigraphic studies in 1968 had pointed out King Erlangga's division of his kingdom in the eleventh century.[13] Anthropologists, meanwhile, think that the epic was possibly a reflection of prehistoric Javanese society. In 1910, the Austrian anthropologist, W. Schmidt suggested that the Panji stories were "a cycle of lunar myths, representing the continuous process of the transition of the moon through its various phases."[14] W.H. Rassers, in his well-known dissertation in 1922, *De Pandji-Roman*, drawing mainly from the most popular Melayu Panji version, *Panji Cekel Waneng Pati*, also suggested that the central theme of the Panji stories is a lunar myth. However, he later abandoned this idea, arguing instead that it was in fact

> [A] totemistic tribe myth, a sort of cosmogony in which the main incidents of the earthly existence of the two divine ancestors of the phratries are related: how they are born and grow up, have to endure the pain of initiation, and finally, after much

[12] R.M.Ng. Poerbatjaraka, "Historische gegevens uit de Smaradahana," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (TBG)* 58 (1919): 461-92, 478; cf. Robson, *Wangbang Wideya*, 14.
[13] Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 157.
[14] For a review of the W. Schmidt and Rassers debate, and also critics of Rassers, see Koentjaraningrat, *Anthropology in Indonesia: A Bibliographical Review* ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975), 134-42.

> suffering and many vicissitudes, marry and found the great community which is the tribe.[15]

Rasser's views drew criticism from, among others, Anung Tedjowirawan who pointed out that several "weaknesses" (*kelemahan*) in Rassers' research had already been disclosed by Poerbatjaraka. Whereas researches on the original meaning (*makna asal atau makna purba*) should rely on the old, authentic text as much as possible, Rassers had taken instead as his source the Panji text that was patently classified within a group of texts that was relatively recent and had already incorporated some accretions (*penambahan*) and alterations (*perubahan*). A reason for this weakness is that, Anung believed, there is no critical analysis (*telaah kritikal*) of the existing Panji texts and this was certainly beyond Rassers's capacity as an expert on anthropology (*ahli antropologi*). More fatally, Rassers had jumped to a conclusion about Javanese society (*masyarakat Jawa*) while basing his study on a Melayu source.[16]

In the Javanese literary tradition, the Panji tales had become an irreducible part of the Javanese cultural history. Despite their origins in Hindu-Buddhist times, the stories evidently flourished in the Islamic sultanates after the collapse of the Majapahit empire, especially in the central Javanese courts. Thomas Stamford Raffles, Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its dependencies during the British occupation in 1811-6, observed that the adventures of Panji Ino Kerta Pati as a historical figure "are described in numerous

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[15] W.H. Rassers, *Panji, the Culture Hero: A Structural Study of Religion in Java* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), 112. For a summary of this Panji text, see Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 164-72.

[16] See Anung Tedjowirawan, "Persejajaran Unsur-unsur Autochton dalam Cerita Panji Angreni dengan Cerita Pantun Mungdinglaya Dikusumah" *Humaniora,* vol.16, no.3 (October 2004): 290-302, 294. For Poerbatjaraka's criticism of Rassers's "confusion" (*kekatjauan*), see his *Tjerita Pandji Dalam Perbandingan,* 386; see also Siti Barorh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara,* 8-9.

romances, which form the subject of still more numerous dramatic exhibitions, and constitute a principal portion of the polite literature, as well as of the popular amusement of Java."[17]

Since the early eighteenth century, romantic tales such as the Panji stories were among the manuscripts owned by the court literati about statecraft, moral teaching, and the like. For instance, in a list of Prince Purbaya's private collection of manuscripts, there is a text in modern Javanese verse titled *Jayalengkara Wulung*, who is a character from the Panji tales.[18] Around the same period, among the texts created by an order of Prince Tirtawiguna, a linguistic, literary, and political figure in the Surakarta court in the middle of the eighteenth century, were the *Damar Wulan*, *Panji Murtasmara*, and *Kuda Narawongsa*.[19] Evidently, Javanese court poets also composed Panji tales of their own invention. For instance, the Surakarta king, Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV (r.1788-1820) amazingly composed three Panji texts, namely, *Panji Dhadhap*, *Panji Raras*, and *Panji Sekar*.[20] One of the great Javanese poets, Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita (1802-73),

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[17] Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2 volumes, 1817, reprinted edition with an introduction by John Bastin (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988), vol.2, 88.
[18] M.C. Ricklefs, *The Seen and Unseen Worlds in Java, 1726-1749: History, Literature and Islam in the Court of Pakubuwana II* (Honolulu: Allen & Unwin and University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 201-2.
[19] Ricklefs, *The Seen and Unseen Worlds in Java*, 172.
[20] Sri Paduka Paku Buwana IV, *Panji Dadap*, translated by Wirasmi Abimanyu, 2 Volumes (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1980); *Panji Raras*, translated by A. Hendrato, 2 volumes (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1978); *Panji Sekar*, translated by Yanti Darmono (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1979), recently it was retranslated as *Panji Sukara*, translated by Lulud Iswadi (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, 1996).

composed perhaps one of the best known Panji versions in Java, namely *Serat Panji Jayengtilam.*[21]

Upon Ranggawarsita's order, his son Raden Panji Ranawarsita also composed in 1862 a poem (*tembang macapat*) featuring another generation of those Javanese protagonists, i.e., the *Serat Panji Suriyawisesa*, a story of Prabu Suriyawisesa (alias Prabu Panji Ino Kertapati), the king of Cintakapura (or Jenggala), who loved fishing. As the story goes, one day the king, who has poisoned the river with a stupefying drug, catches a big crowned fish and has it cut into pieces. The fish, however, turns out to be the father of his daughter in law, Dewi Minawati who herself also turns into a fish after having cursed this ill-fortuned kingdom. Having learnt of his misdeed, the king abdicates and becomes a hermit. The kingdom is eventually swept by a virulent epidemic and a disastrous storm, and the princes and princesses are dispersed. His son, Prabu Suryamiluhur (Raden Kuda Laleyan), survives the storm but becomes lamed (*cacat tubuh*). He then turns to asceticism, regains his power, and wanders around until he is finally reunited with his other relatives in the Panji style.[22]

During the British occupation, Raffles was informed that "the adventures and reign of the celebrated *Panji*, and that of his successor *Lalean*, until he established himself at *Pajajaran*," were, among others, the subject of the Wayang Gedog

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[21] About this renowned poet, see Kenji Tsuchiya, "Javanology and the Age of Ranggawarsita: An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Javanese Culture," in Takashi Shiraishi (ed.), *Reading Southeast Asia: Translation of Contemporary Japanese Scholarship on Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1990).

[22] Raden Panji Ranawarsita, *Serat Panji Suryawisesa*, 1862, collection number PB.C.11/L.331, Sonobudoyo Musuem, Yogyakarta. For a summary and treatment of this manuscript, see M.M. Sri Haryanti, "Serat Panji Suryawisesa: Analisis Struktural dan Amant" (Skripsi, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, 2000).

performance and that, furthermore, "the adventures of *Panji* compose the most popular portion of it."[23] The tradition remains alive today. During my trip to Java in August 2005, a member of the popular folk dance group attached to the Wonogiri Regency Tourism and Art Culture Office (*Kantor Pariwisata dan Seni Budaya Kabupaten Wonogiri*) in central Java told me that his group still performs a story from the *Panji Asmara Bangun*, especially a monkey dance of the younger brother of Candra Kirana.[24]

At present the Panji stories, harnessed as one of the important elements in imaginings of an ancient origin of the Indonesian nation, are unmistakably viewed as autochthonous folktales (*cerita rakyat*) of Javanese origin.[25] In an attempt to embroider the stories with imagining the nation, the authentic Java (*asli Jawa*) is now articulated through a new epistemic technique exploited by the task force of national education and culture, the outcome of which is that "Jawa (Indonesia)" is flawlessly interchanged with "Indonesia (Jawa)."[26] In the opinion of the Indonesian scholars who had carried out their research project about the influence of Panji stories on the modern Javanese romantic plot under the auspices of the Department of Education and Culture (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan),

> Panji is usually regarded as the real Javanese hero (*pahlawan Jawa asli*)... these stories are still extremely relevant to our lives in the present and even in times to

[23] Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol.1, 338-9.
[24] See Naskah Cerita "Kethek Ogleng," composed by Dinas Perhubungan, Pariwisata dan Seni Budaya, Kabupaten Wonogiri, 23 July 2001.
[25] Anung, "Persejajaran Unsur-unsur Autochton dalam Cerita Panji Angreni dengan Cerita Pantun Mungdinglaya Dikusumah," 291.
[26] Sardanto Cokrowinoto, Anhari Basuki, Yudiono K.S., Kismarmiati, *Pengaruh Cerita Panji Pada Alur Roman Jawa Modern* [Influence of the Panji Stories in the Javanese Modern Romantic Plot] (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1990), 1, 7, 11 and passim.

> come. Definitely they should be preserved as the inheritance of old values (*warisan nilai-nilai luhur*) from the ancestors of the Indonesian nation.[27]

Having claimed that its influence is still, and will continue to be, considerable the Department of Education and Culture commented further that the Panji theme could be detected in modern Indonesian literature.[28] In the words of Siti Baroroh Baried and his co-writers, "In this way, the influence of Java encrypted within the Panji stories is looming large. . . The process of constituting Javanese culture by various nationalities in the archipelago through the Panji stories is repeatedly articulated in different places."[29]

More recently, during the Soeharto period, a Panji figure appeared regularly for more than a decade (i.e., 1979-1992) in cartoons by the well-known artist Dwi Koendoro appearing in the Sunday edition of *Kompas*, the most popular Indonesian daily newspaper.[30] In his interview with Muhammad Nashir Setiawan on 14 September 2000, Dwi Koendoro said that "the Panji title/name here is also influenced by the Panji tales that were alive, especially in Javanese society" (*nama 'Panji' di sini juga dipengaruhi oleh cerita-cerita Panji yang hidup di masyarakat Jawa khususnya*). According to Setiawan, "the Panji character in the Hikayat tales and in Dwi Koendoro's version in fact share some similarities; among other things, both Panji characters parallel each other as

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[27] "Panji sering dipandang sebagai tokoh pahlawan Jawa asli... cerita itu masih sangat releven dengan kehidupan masa kini dan masa yang akan datang, yang seharusnya dilestarikan sebagai warisan nilai-nilai luhur dari nenek moyang bangsa Indonesia." Sardanto et al, *Pengaruh Cerita Panji Pada Alur Roman Jawa Modern*, 29 and 35.
[28] Sardanto et al, *Pengaruh Cerita Panji Pada Alur Roman Jawa Modern*, 50-60.
[29] "Dengan cara demikianlah pengaruh Jawa dalam bentuk cerita Panji terbesar luas... Proses pemusatan kebudayaan Jawa oleh bangsa-bangsa di kawasan Nusantara lewat cerita Panji terjadi berulang-ulang dalam tempat yang berbeda-beda." Siti Barorh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara*, 5.
[30] Dwi Koendoro, *Panji Koming 1 (1979-1984)* (Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo, Gramedia, in corporation with the Harian Kompas, 1992).

figures in search of the truth" (*Tokoh Panji dalam hikayat dan Panji bersi Dwi Koen[doro] memiliki beberapa persamaan, antara lain keduanya sama-sama sebagai tokoh yang mencari kebenaran*).[31]

As Fadjar Thufail observed, Dwi Koendoro's cartoons carried a political meaning in their criticism of the government.[32] On Sunday, 11 May 1980, for instance, Panji Koming is on his way to a foreign country but he is stopped by a soldier, who yells at him, "Stop! You are not allowed to go abroad" (*Brenti! Kamu nggak boleh pergi ke negri seberang*). Curious about this prohibition, Panji Koming is said to enquire from the Pamong, the top official, as to the reason for this. He rushes directly to the official, but the Pamong keeps quiet. At the end, Panji Koming sees that there is something on the Pamong's back, a skin fungus (*panu*), and mocks him. Suddenly, the official screams at him, "That is the REASON. I am afraid that if you went abroad you would blurt out that I have a skin fungus on my back. YOU UNDERSTAND!" (Itu sebabnya! Aku kuatir di sana kamu ceplas ceplos bilang punggungku panuan. NGERTI!). So saying, he simply walks away.[33]

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[31] Muhammad Nashir Setiawan, *Menakar Panji Koming: Tafsiran Komik Karya Dwi Koendoro Pada Masa Reformasi Tahun 1998* [Evaluating Panji Koming: Interpretation of Dwi Koendoro's Comics during the Reformation Year, 1998] (Jakarta: Kompas, 2002), 55.

[32] See Fadjar Thufail, "Cartoons and the Quest for Democracy in Indonesia: A Brief Sketch," GSC Quarterly Newsletter, No.4 (Spring 2002); accessed through URL: http://www.ssrc.org/gsc/newsletter4/thufail.htm, 2 February 2006.

[33] Dwi Koendoro, *Panji Koming 1 (1979-1984)*, 105.

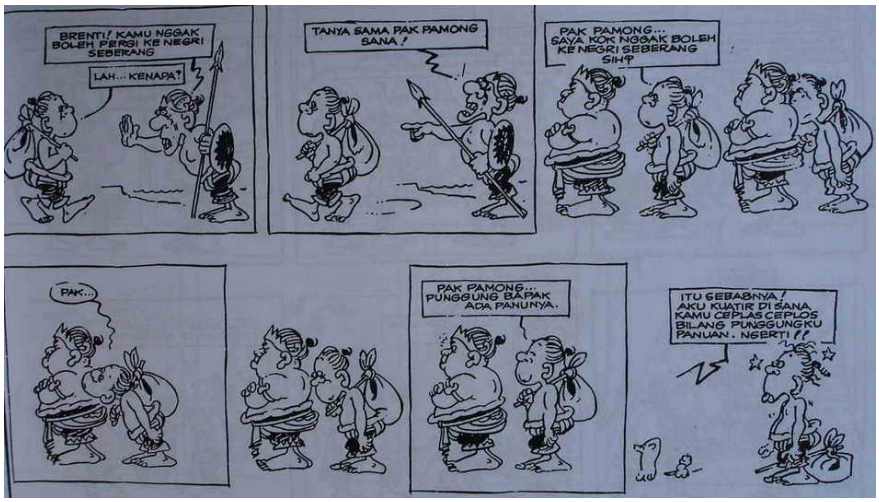

Illustration 3: Panji Koming, by Dwi Koendoro, Kampas, 11 May 1980.

Evidently, the Panji tales were extremely popular throughout Southeast Asia -- from Java to Bali, Sumatra, the Melayu world, Thai, Burma and Cambodia. Its plausible widespread influence is captured by Adrian Vickers's irresistibly charming phrase, "a Panji civilization in Southeast Asia."[34] Spread by sea merchants through the trading routes, the Panji tales became one of the most popular literatures in Southeast Asia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the Melayu literary world, there were about "two hundred manuscripts of works about Panji, containing about one hundred different

[34] Vickers, *Journeys of Desire*, 14. Interestingly, according to Reynaldo Ileto (personal communication) we "can even add parts of the Philippines to this civilization, judging from structural, thematic and other affinities between the Panji and the Tagalog *Adarna* tales." This tale was quite popular in the Philippines for centuries before it was printed in Tagalog in the 1860s. It is a story of three brothers who have been tasked to capture the magical Adarna bird to cure their father's illness, and the throne would be the reward. In their adventures, they encounter dangers from the bird's enchanted singing that can put one to sleep and from its droppings that can turn one into stone. After the bird is captured, the youngest brother (the hero of the tale) is betrayed by his brothers, one of whom takes his beloved back to the kingdom. Left for dead, the hero recovers through the help of mythical figures, reaching a rival kingdom where he is captivated by the beauty of the princess and forgets his original beloved. A play, analogous to the wayang kulit, is even staged in the end to jog memories. The parallels with Panji are striking. Apart from the literary text, the Adarna appears in films and comics. For a summary, see http://www.viloria.com/ibongadarna.

(at least by title) texts, sometimes quite voluminous."[35] Judging from those reliefs mentioned above and the contemporary literary linkages, Braginsky believes that "as early as the fifteenth - early sixteenth centuries works about Panji were widely popular in both Java and the Malay world."[36] In an attempt to compare some features of the Melayu and the Javanese texts, a group of Melayu scholars concludes that "the similarities between Malay Panji stories and Javanese Panji stories are far greater than the differences."[37]

In one of the most popular Javanese versions there is a certain sea voyage in which Lempungraras or Astramiruda is shipwrecked and washed ashore at Patani.[38] As these romantic tales spread, they eventually came to include a dramatic trip by a mysterious ship farther out to the port of Ayutthaya, and, later, to Burma and Cambodia. In fact, both the Burmese and the Cambodian versions are a "translation" from a variation of the Thai version. An example is the Burmese Panji tale, *Eenaung*, bearing the curious original title of *Aindarwuntha*, written for a Burmese court dance performance. And we are also informed that it was a translation by a certain Myawaddi of an early Thai manuscript belonging to a courtier-dancing troupe at Ayutthaya, which the Burmese army had brought back with them after having sacked that city in 1767.[39] Meanwhile, the

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[35] Abdul Rahman Kaeh, *Hikayat Misa Taman Jaeng Kusuma: Sebuah Kajian Kritis* (Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication, 1977), 15-6 and 174-80, cf. Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 159.
[36] Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 157. For the Melayu Panji, see also G.L. Koster, *Roaming through Seductive Gardens: Readings in Malay Narrative* (Leiden: KITLV, 1997).
[37] Harun Mat Piah et al, *Traditional Malay Literature*, translated by Harry Aveling, 2nd edition (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2002), 202.
[38] Siti Baroroh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara*, 28-9.
[39] Maung Htin Aung, *Burmese drama: a study, with translations, of Burmese plays* {first published in 1937} (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 36-41.

Cambodian version was undoubtedly recomposed, in the Khmer verse forms, from a translation of *Inao*. Having been under the domination of the Thai court since the eighteenth century, the Cambodian court culture was heavily influenced by Bangkok tastes. Apart from other literary texts, its Panji version was translated from the King Rama II recension by a Cambodian court poet during the early nineteenth century.[40]

With the expansion of trade and contact in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in which the Melayu language was an important medium, the Panji romances were more or less intertwined in the cultural crosshatch that formed in the contact zone of Southeast Asia. People were delighted with these "Javanese" romances and their state of great excitement was reflected to a large extent in various modes ranging from literary texts, paintings to dance performances. In the Thai society itself, especially the Ayutthaya and Bangkok courts, these romances were translated and recomposed in a Thai verse form, then swiftly reworked into a dance theatre, which became greatly popular. Later in the chapter I shall offer a fragmented reading of the *Inao* text, but first let us discuss the Thai Panji manuscripts.

Of the Manuscripts and its Structure

Inao and *Dalang* were composed in an indigenous *klon* verse form that was a late development of Thai poetry dating from the eighteen century, during the Ayutthaya period.[41] They were intended for recitation or as song accompaniment to a dance

[40] Shanti Phakdikham, *Kham samphan rawang wannadi thai-khamen ph.s.2325-2403* [Relations between Thai and Khmer Literatures, 1872-1860] (Unpublished research, Faculty of Humanities, Sri Nakarinwirot University, 2004), 160-5.
[41] For an account of the development of Thai poetical verse forms, see William Gedney, "Siamese Verse Forms in Historical Perspective," in his *Selected Papers on Comparative*

performance. According to a contemporary evidence, *Inao* was performed once during a celebratory ceremony at the shrine of the Buddha's Footprint in the mid-eighteenth century, and such was its charm that, as related in a contemporary poem, in "seeing them he wants to die no more" (*khrai yon bo yak wai*) and "his mind would be eternally lost in dream" (*chit chong mamoe fan*).[42] As the poem goes,

> For those court dancers (*lakhon nai*)
> Of his Majesty the king,
> Their performing hall is at the hill's foot,
> They do not even look at the man.
> All are carefully chosen only from a maiden,
> Young, tender, and bashful,
> Seeing them, he wants to die no more,
> His mind would be eternally lost in dream.
> They sing the story of the Raden who takes,
> Butsaba, his betrothed (*tunangan*),
> Residing in the mountain cave,
> Having shared carnal pleasure (*ruam ruedi lom*).[43]

With the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767, a large number of manuscripts were unfortunately lost, including both original versions of the Panji stories. All the manuscripts compiled during the early Bangkok period in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are presumed to be reconstructions of the old Ayutthaya versions,

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Tai Studies, edited by Robert J. Bickner, John Hartman, Thomas John Hudak, and Patcharin Peyasantiwong (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1989). See also Gedney's *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, edited Thomas John Hudak (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1997).

[42] Maha Nak, *Bunnowat kham chan* [A Discourse of Bunna, in *chan* verse form], reprinted in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya* [Literature of the Ayutthaya Period] 3 volumes (Bangkok: Kromsinlapakon, 1992), vol.3, 334; and see also Thomas John Hudak, *The Indigenization of Pali Meters in Thai Poetry* (Athens, Ohio: Southeast Asian Studies Series, Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1990), appendix.

[43] Maha Nak, *Bunnowat kham chan*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 334.

except an episode that was composed in *chan* verse form in 1779, in the final years of the Thonburi period (1767-82), by Luang Sorawichit (Hon).[44]

As mentioned, the oldest existing manuscripts of both versions, i.e. *Dalang* and *Inao*, were reconstructed, reproduced, or reworked by a committee of court poets presided over by King Rama I. The first manuscript was a complete, lengthy and complicated story consisting of 9,870 stanzas in *klon* verse form, frequently interpolated with many Javanese and Melayu lexical elements, which possibly was a copy of the original Ayutthaya version.[45] However, the second was a rather fragmented manuscript, consisting of 1,772 stanzas in the *klon* verse form.[46]

The main part of the latter version, possibly, may have been based on an older Ayutthaya manuscript, as the coda states that the *Inao* story had been composed in the past but not completed, and the King (possibly Rama I) had thereby attempted to complete the whole story. When a fragment of this version was found at Nakorn Si Thammarat, King Chulalongkorn commented that it was the old version of *Inao* from the Ayutthaya period, especially when considering its description of the Ayutthaya palace compound. It might have been transcribed in Nakorn Si Thammarat using the local style

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[44] Luang Sorawichit (Hon), *Inao kham chan* [Inao in *Chan* verse form], first published in Vajirañana vol.20, no.78/5: 338-376 (Bangkok: Kromsilapakorn, 1996). Clearly, this is the oldest version that could be found, but it is a very short episode relating the story when Inao abducts Raden Butsaba and takes her to the secret cave, after burning the capital city of Daha. Later during the Bangkok period, Luang Sorawichit became the Minister of the Treasury and a reputed poet. He also presided over a famous translation of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and the two famous episodes of the Vessantara Jataka, i.e. Matsi and Kumara.

[45] King Rama I, *Dalang* {first published in 1890} (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Somdetphra Srisavarindira Boromrajdevi (H.E. Queen Sawang Watthana), 1956).

[46] King Rama I, *Botlakhon rueang Inao* [Script of Inao for Dancing Drama] {first published in 1917} (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Phem Sratthathat, 1966), (hereafter cited in text as *INRI*).

of writing that was close to the Nakorn vernacular.[47] Prince Damrong later wrote an introduction to this version for its first publication in 1917 in which he stated that, after careful observation, he believed it was composed by King Rama I. Nevertheless, when he wrote a history of the *Inao* dance performance later in 1921, he changed his mind and was now inclined to accept Chulalongkorn's view that it was the Ayutthaya version.[48]

This confusion is based on Damrong's assumption about the subject-author, presuming that King Rama I and his committee of poets had produced a totally new work or a new pattern of sounds rather different from the original manuscript. But if one reads both manuscripts carefully, it can be seen that both were actually copied from the same manuscript. Evidently, as will be shown in a translation of the Melaka episode in the following chapter, this fragmented version had been reworked again by a court poet committee presided over by King Rama II, with the intention of improving the original verse style to make it perfectly suitable with dance movements. The complete version by King Rama II and his committee, mainly in *klon* verse form, is quite lengthy, consisting of 10,701 stanzas. It includes an extra 34 stanzas of the "kham phak" (literally, "an explanatory remark"), composed in *kap* verse forms, 12 short series of "kham cheracha" (literally, "a conversation"), composed in *rai* verse form that feature a story of the shadow puppet play, and a 6 stanzas coda at the end. This massive poetic effort eventually produced the main corpus of the *Inao* version.[49]

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[47] Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao* [History of Inao Play], first published in 1921, reprinted in his *Lakhon fon ram* [Dancing Performance] (Bangkok: Matichon, 2003), 311-318.
[48] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 318.
[49] King Rama II, *Inao* {first published in 1874, the recension used here first published in 1921 by Vajirañana Royal Library, edited by Prince Damrong and Prince Kawiphot Suphricha} (Bangkok: Sinalpabannakan, 2003), 1206-7, (hereafter cited in text as *INRII*).

Among all these Thai Panji versions, the Rama II recension was highly celebrated because of its poetical style and splendid verse, and was regularly performed by court dancing troupes. These troupes were generally recruited from the kings' consorts, when one of King Mongkut's queens passed away he had a temple built in Bangkok, Wat Somanat, in which the mural paintings of the main hall was devotedly illustrated with the story of *Inao* because it was the queen's favorite.[50] In 1914, King Vajiravudh (r.1910-25) set up his Literary Society (*Wannakhadi samoson*), presided over by the King himself with Prince Damrong as Vice-President, which aimed to "improve the writing of Thai books" (*utnun wicha taeng nangsue phasa thai hai di khuen*) in order to counter those increasing "mediocre" (*yang leo*) works. The Society selected the best specimens from various genres of Thai literary works, which were honored as examples of Thai literary excellence and "awarded with the Society's seal featuring Ganesh, patron of the arts in Hinduism."[51] Among them, the Rama II recension of *Inao* was celebrated as a shining example of the "dancing drama verse" (*bot lakhon*).

The Rama II version of Inao, moreover, became essential reading from the "canon" of Thai literature in the curriculum for public schools from the time of King Vajiravudh reign.[52] Because of its canonization in Thai literary studies, I will draw my

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[50] For a complete illustration, see Chutima Chonhacha (ed.), *Mural Paintings of Thailand Series: Wat Somanat Wihan* (Bangkok: Muaeng Boran, 1995).
[51] For the formation and institutionalization of the Thai "Literature," see Thanapol Limapichart, "The Public Sphere and the Birth of 'Literature' in Siam" (M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2003), 55-70.
[52] Thanapol, "The Public Sphere and the Birth of 'Literature' in Siam," 66. Other selected works are *Phranon kham luang* (Story of King Nonda) for poetry, *Lilit phra lo* for the *lilit* verse genre, *Samutthakote kham chan* for the *chan* verse, *Mahachat klon thet* for the *kap* and *raiyao* verse, *Sepha rueang khun chang khun phaen* for the *klon* verse, *Huachai nakrop* for the spoken drama, *Samkok* for the prose narrative, *Phra ratchaphiti sipsong duean* for the essay.

examples from the story mainly from this recension, and since all manuscripts are already published, I will rely on the printed materials. The edition I use here was edited by Prince Damrong and Prince Kawiphot Supricha, first published in 1921 and was then already running into its fifteenth printing.

The physical layout of the *Inao* text is usually as follows: two hemistiches per one line, separated by a space. The first hemistich (*wak*)[53] of each "paragraph" is indented, with the symbol ⊙ in the front. Sometimes above this symbol there is a note indicating the reciting/singing style, for example, *Cha*, *Chapi*, *Thon*, *Rai*, *Yani*, *Lila krathum*, *Chom talat*, etc. Each "paragraph" is enclosed with the number of *Kham* (lit. "word") but here meaning a line or *Bat* in *klon* verse form; each line consists of two hemistiches, and one stanza (*Bot*) consists of two lines. For instance,

Cha
⊙ Ma cha klao bot pai Thueng si ong thong than na**tha**
Pen no nuea chuea wong the**wa** Pithuret man**da** dieo **kan**
Rung rueang rittha sakda **det** Dai damrong nakha**ret** khet**khan**
Phra chettha khrong krung kure**pan** That **nan** khrong daha tha**ni**
Ong nueng khrong kalang buri**rat** Ong nueng khrong sing**hat**sa**ri**
Chaloem lok loka tha**tri** Mai **mi** phu ro to **rit**
Rabue lue thua thuk pra**thet** Yom kreng **det** decha aya**sit**
Bamrung rat dap khen yu pen **nit** Doei thang thotsa**phit** ratchathan ๑
๑8 *kham* ๑
Slow
⊙ Here I will tell a story about the four kings.

[53] Hemistich or *wak* means a series of syllables that will contain a different number and pattern according to its verse form. In the oldest indigenous Thai verse form, i.e. *khlong*, one hemistich consists of five-syllables and one stanza could consist of two to five hemistiches accordingly. Meanwhile, the basic structure of *klon* consists of two-hemistiches per line, 6-9 syllables each and two lines per stanza, with a rhyme between each hemistich and between each stanza. For discussions on the Thai versification system, see Gedney's "Siamese Verse Forms in Historical perspective"; Manas Chitakasem's "Poetic Conventions and Modern Thai Poetry," *Thai Construction of Knowledge*, edited by Manas Chitakasem and Andrew Turton (London: SOAS, 1991); and Hudak, *The Indigenization of Pali Meters in Thai Poetry*, 45-172.

> Being the descendants of the god dynasty, sharing the same parent.
> Prosperous, victorious and powerful, reigning in their realms.
> The eldest brother rules Kurepan; the younger one rules Daha;
> The third one rules Kalang; the youngest one rules Singasari.
> Celebrating the entire world, none will dare to challenge.
> Renowned throughout every kingdom, [all] fear of their might.
> Conscientious for the populace's well-being by his majesties' virtues. ๆ
> *๑8 lines* ๆ
> (*INRII* 19)

Since the manuscript was not only a literary text, but was also intended for dance performance, this numbering is sometimes followed by an indication of the traditional musical song accompanying the recitation of those stanzas during the dance performance. Or there may be a stasis in the characters' conversation such as, for example, *๑4 kham* ๆ *Sathukan*, meaning that the paragraph above consists of 4 lines and the supplementary music is the *Sathukan* song that evokes a respectful atmosphere. Instrumental music was traditionally played to accompany the dance performance and/or the lyric recitation. Thoughout the text, the Rama II version exploits a large number (more than 75) of instrumental songs such as, for example, *Chom talat* (touring the market), *Sa burong* (the bird's pond), *Mon rong hai* (crying of the Mon), *Kinnon ram* (dance of the mythical nymph), *Klong khaek* (the Melayu gong), and so on.[54]

A Fragmented Reading of ***Inao***

Similar to the themes of the Panji stories in the Javanese-Melayu world, *Inao* is a court romantic tale centered on the prince of Kurepan (Inao) and the princess of Daha (Butsaba). They have been betrothed to each other since the latter's birth but because of

[54] For a treatment of an instrumental music in accompanying the dancing performance, see Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 238-55.

Inao's love affair with the princess of Manya, the betrothal is broken off by the prince. Later, the prince realizes that his former betrothed is actually the most beautiful, but the lovers cannot manage to find a happy solution because of the intervention of the deity. The couple has to go on a long adventure, conquering several Javanese kingdoms and losing their way before finding each other again. Eventually, the lovers come to Kalang and finally manage to get married. The story ends with happiness in the Javanese world.

Structurally, the text can be broken into five different episodes; 1) the introductory phase, 2) the Manya romance, 3) the Daha complication, 4) the endless adventures of desire, and 5) the reunion at Kalang. The rest of this chapter is an attempt to summarize these episodes, supplemented by translations of selected stanzas that best help the reader to capture the scene. Some comparisons with other versions will also be made. As we are dealing with a literary work, I have decided to use the present tense in relating the story. As a text for the dance drama, the tale is generally related in the narrative present. It uses a progressive causality of one event leading to another that leads the reader along the story's movement through each dance scene by an indication of the performance of music coupled with a remark of "then/when" (*Bat nan* or *Muea nan*), and so on.

Episode I: Introductory Phase

The early phase of the poem, comprising 258 stanzas, begins by introducing the main characters, the social structure of the Javanese court, and general religious practices. This is apparently intended to generate a fictive illustration of Java.

There are four powerful kingdoms in Java, i.e., Kurepan, Kalang, Daha, and Singhasari. Later the story will reveal that these four kingdoms are related to the *Wong Asandaewa*, the divine origin. In ancient times, it was said, the kingdom of Manya was prosperous and full of joy, similar to a city of gods. Because the king of Manya had four daughters and could not find suitable partners for these princesses, one day a sword and a flag miraculously appear in front of the palace ground. The kingdom was in a state of famine, fighting and killing were everywhere, and the people were experiencing great suffering. After the king had tried without success to pull out the sword and the flag, he declared that whoever could extract them could have a princess's hand in marriage and half of his kingdom. Unfortunately, no one could accomplish this task. There were, however, four gods from Mount Krailat in the heavens who transformed themselves into human form and pulled out the sword and the flag. However, they did not want the kingdom. Instead they took the four princesses and founded four new kingdoms (*INRII* 118-9).

The capital cities of these four kingdoms are praised in the tale in terms that might have been used to describe the royal city of Bangkok in the early nineteenth century. In contrast to the Rama I version in which each kingdom is located on a natural site -- i.e., Kurepan with *Gunung Waharikan*, Daha with *Gunung Wilitmara*, Kalang with *Gunung Chamaleng Giri* and *Gunung Prachangan*, and Singhasari with *Gunung Tuwan* (*INRI* 5-6, 179) -- in the Rama II version only Daha is topologically located on a natural sacred site, the *Giri Wilitsamara* (Mount Wilitsamara) located east of Daha. This mountain was greatly revered and was believed to house a powerful deity. Each year, a sacred ritual had to be performed there by the Daha court (*INRII* 6).

The removal of a number of sacred sites from the Rama II version is significant. This change to the Javanese landscape originally pictured in the Rama I fragmented version, aligns the narrative closer to the early nineteenth century Thai audience, as signaled by the reference to Bangkok toponyms. For example, the text refers to *San thepharak* (sacred hall for the spatial deity), *Lak muang* (literally, nail of the capital), *Sao chingcha* (the Hindu ceremonial swing pole), *Wat phram* (the Brahmin temple), elephant bridge, the port and ships of various nationals such as "khaek" (Muslim/Melayu), "wilanda" (Dutch), Chinese, Cham, Acehnese, etc., who feature as the numeral figurative trope of the "sipsong phasa" (literally "twelve tongues," connoting plenty of nationalities). Moreover, in contrast to the observation by Stuart Robson that "there is no trace of Islamic influence" in the Panji stories,[55] in this Thai version mosques (*surao riang khiang khan panya*) are mentioned along with other religious practices, e.g., Buddhism and Hindu, in the four kingdoms and the other coastal kingdoms as well (*INRII* 4-5).

The King of Kurepan's first son, Karattapati, was born of a minor queen, the Liku. However, it is the King's second son, born of the principal queen, the Pramaisuri, who becomes the prince-hero of the tale. At the latter's birth, the "Ong asan daewa" or the deity Patarakala of his great grandfather comes down from heaven (*krayangan*) and gives him a *kris* inscribed with his name, i.e. "Yang-yang Nuengrat Intra Udakan Saripati Inao Eng Yang Tala Motariyakat dang Surasi Dayang Ariratpairi Engka Nakhari Kurepan" (*INRII* 16-7). At the age of fifteen, his lovely figure is highly praised:

[55] Stuart O. Robson, *Wangbang Wideya: A Javanese Panji Romance* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 11.

> Ngam rap sap sin sanrapang
> Ying yang thewa nai rasi
> Song chom pralom chai nari
> Pen thi pradiphat phukphan
>
> His bodily figure is extremely beautiful,
> Almost comparable to the celestial angel;
> His appearance is greatly attractive to all females,
> Being the object of desire.
> (*INRII* 22)

His strikingly beautiful appearance (*ngam dang asandeawa*), when fully dressed in princely regalia, fascinates the people of Manya that they could not even take their eyes off him (*INRII* 35). In his royal procession to Melaka, his celestial beauty generates such irresistible desire that a daughter of a Melaka minister eventually sneaks away from her father at night to pay a call on him. He is industrious in studying the essential knowledge for kingship and excels in the martial arts such as use of the *kris*, sword fighting (*ram krabi*) and horse riding (*khi acha*), which he practices every day.

At Daha, the Pramaisuri also gives birth to princess Raden Butsaba Nuengrat, who is betrothed to Inao from birth, and prince Raden Sriyatra Nuengrat, who is also given a *kris* inscribed with his name from the deity. Meanwhile the Kalang princesses, namely Butsabaraka and Sakanuengrat, are betrothed to Karattapati (elder brother of Inao) and Raden Suranakong, the prince of Singhasari.

Episode II: the Manya Romance

After a descriptive introduction, the narrative finally begins when the queen mother of Manya, Inao's grandmother, passes away. Since his mother is pregnant, Inao is dispatched to represent Kurepan and Daha in the cremation ceremony at Manya. Once

there, upon catching sight of the nymph-like beauty, Raden Chintarawati, the princess of Manya, Inao falls deliriously in love with her. After the grand cremation ceremony, he attempts to stay on. Learning of Inao's love-sickness through a secret courier, the king sends an ultimatum demanding his return.

> The message said that, your mother
> Thinks of you with great sadness,
> She waits for you everyday,
> Since her pregnancy is already at ten months,
> Feeling pain rather often,
> She is worried about giving birth;
> In case she dies,
> How could you then see her last breath?
> You must return to the capital soon,
> Within seven nights;
> If you are late for this deadline (*kamnot*),
> Even though you have arrived, you will not be welcome anymore.
> (*INRII* 70)

Before he leaves, Inao succeeds in exchanging gifts with the princess (*INRII* 25-82).

Upon Inao's return to Kurepan the King proposes to his brother the King of Daha that Inao marry Raden Butsaba Nuengrat. Having been caught up with his first love, Raden Chintarawati, Inao's heart is still burning (*phra rengron ruethai dang fai phlan*). Eventually, he decides to escape from his marriage ceremony and asks to go on a forest trip, camouflaging himself as a forest dweller (*chao aranwa* or *chao phrai*) and changing his name to "Misara Panyi" or "Misarang Parangti Panyi Kasamarang" (*INRII* 90-97).

At the "Gunung Parapi" (patently a corruption of Mount Merapi), Inao encounters the three kings--Ratu Pancharakan, Ratu Pakmangan and Ratu Butsina--who are on their

way back from the wedding ceremony of Ratu Butsina and the princess of Pattaram.[56] Provoked by an unintentional quarrel between Prasanta, Inao's close escort who is trying to lure and catch a wild turtle-dove, and Ratu Butsina's soldiers, Inao fights the unfortunate king and kills him. With the intervention of *Sang Palinge Rusi* (Sang Paling Ruci, lit. "the most reverend ascetic") who reveals that the forest bandit (*panchuret chonpa*, a coupling of the Melayu (Indonesian) word Prajurit [soldier] and the Thai word Chonpa [forest bandit]), is actually Prince Inao of Kurepan, the kings unconditionally submit and give their daughters (Sakarawati and Mayaratsami) and son (Raden Sangkhamarata) as tributes to Inao. When the other four kingdoms learn of the battle, they also submit and pay tribute (*INRII* 98-132).

After unexpectedly arriving in Manya, Inao orders a royal procession:

> Hurriedly preparing the procession order,
> Selecting only the fine figures,
> Fully, five thousand men according to his order,
> Dressed in different costumes.
> The recruited rifle corps is dressed in red trousers,
> Covering their heads with the *tabit* cloth, strapped with a *kris* on their belts,
> Their shirts are yellow, Chinese style (*krabuan chin*),
> Carrying yellowish golden guns.
> The voluntary force carries twin pikes,
> Covering their heads with pink cloth, hanging neckties,
> Soft violet shirts, with a violet flower pattern,
> Their commander rides a horse.
> All the high-ranking soldiers,
> Clothed in black velvet,
> Cover their heads with a fine ruby cloth,
> Everyone strapped with swords with golden handles on their belts.

[56] Ratu is an old royal title in Java - for example, Ratu Adil or the Just King. After having defeated his most powerful Islamic opponent, the Lord of Giri, in 1736 Sultan Agung (r. 1613-46) also reportedly used the title Ratu or more officially, Susunan Ratu. However, a rather familiar usage of this term is an honorific title of the queen, for example, Ratu Mas Kencana, the queen of Pakubuwana II (r.1726-49). See, Ricklefs, *The Seen and Unseen World in Java*, 39. In all Thai Panji versions, *ratu* is used as a title of a petty king.

> Now, all seat orderly,
> Quite bustling a forest track,
> The commander is now busy reviewing his force,
> Everyone is confused in his task.
> Also prepared already is his riding horse,
> Bridle and saddle fully put on…
> Waiting for his royal highness.
> (*INRII* 141)

Inao himself is resplendent, dressed in princely regalia - a strange combination of Thai court ceremonial costume and exotic Javanese elements, exactly how Thai court poets imagined a Javanese prince should dress. He wore a fitted trunk, a top elaborately embroidered in gold, a bracelet embellished with a ruby hanging from the front of his waist, a gold-and-diamond ring, a bejeweled crown decorated with ear-shape ornaments, a decorative hanging cloth, and, essential for Inao's costume, he wore a *kris*.

> Strapped to his waist the invincible *kris*.
> He proceeds,
> Elegant as a lion-king (*ratcha kraison*).
> (*INRII* 142)

Illustration 4: Inao dances with his kris, mural painting, Wat Somanat, Bangkok, picture by author, 14 October 2005.

The people are totally fascinated with the procession (*phitsawong long lae mai moen dai*). Having laid their eyes upon his appearance, they cannot shut them (*tang phinit phit phlang mai wang ta*); they even forget to pay him respect.

After taking up residence in Manya, Inao attempts to convince his uncle to give him the princess's hand. Reluctant to make a decision, the Manya king chooses to play blind to the affair between his princess and Inao, fearful of provoking the anger of the king of Kurepan. Burning with desire, Inao finally sneaks into the princess's boudoir at night. After overcoming her initial resistance, they feel like having "gone to heaven" (*dang dai phan mueang fa*). Later on, he also approaches Sakarawati and Mayarasmi (*INRII* 147-75).

This episode then ends with another development that takes place in the background. Upon learning of Inao's reappearance in Manya, the king of Kurepan sends a dispatch demanding his return. Deep amidst his happiness, Inao asks for a delay. When the king of Daha repeatedly reminds him about the arranged wedding ceremony and his father sends him another dispatch, Inao decides to break off his betrothal with Raden Butsaba Nuengrat. Believing that the latter could not surpass the princess of Manya in beauty, and partly also fearing his father's anger, he refuses to return. He writes to his father that the king of Daha could marry Raden Butsaba off to whomever he wants (*maen khrai ma kho butsaba/ chong hai tam pratthana khao nan*) (*INRII* 178). When the King of Kurepan tells his brother the truth and asks for a postponement, the King of Daha becomes very angry with Inao. Princess Raden Butsaba Nuengrat is also in great sorrow (*INRII* 179-80). The Manya romance episode, then, ends with Inao enjoying great pleasure among his three beautiful new wives.

Though the structure of the narrative of the Rama II recension generally parallels the earlier Rama I version, the difference is that in the Rama I version Inao makes just one instead of two trips to Manya. The Rama II version, consisting of 1,740 stanzas (*INRII* 20-185) greatly expands upon the Rama I version, which consists of just 622 stanzas *(INRI* 30-106).

Episode III: the Daha Complication

When Ratu Choraka, a bachelor brother of the king of Lasam (Lasem), learns about the situation in Daha, he sends a court painter to draw the picture of the famous princess of Daha. Ratu Choraka himself is a notoriously grotesque character who has

regularly figured in derogatory allegory in Thai literature as well as in daily life. Ratu Choraka himself fully recognizes this, and this is reason enough for him to seek an unsurpassed beauty to be his queen.

> The Ratu thinks himself,
> An extremely repulsive figure (*rupsong appalak nakna*),
> Cannot find any dashing part throughout his body,
> Curly hair, grotesque face (*phak phriang*),
> His nose is big, without any charismatic aura (*mai sanga rasi*),
> His voice is hoarse, unpleasant to hear (*haeng haep saep siang*).
> Having thought to find a maiden to be his couple,
> Whose beauty should only be comparable with a nymph to balance him.
> Having sent (artists) to draw all females in other kingdoms,
> All in the Java land, no one left,
> Having seen their figures all,
> None of them satisfies him.
> (*INRII* 186)

Hiding himself in the royal garden, the painter has the chance to draw her portrait twice: the first, unadorned, freshly awoken from her sleep, and the second, fully dressed in princess's regalia. However, on his way back to Choraka, the deity Patarakala takes the latter painting and brings it to another prince, Raden Wiyasakam, son of the Ratu Kamang Kuning, during his hunting session. But even with just the portrait of the unadorned princess, Ratu Choraka falls deliriously in love with Raden Butsaba:

> Then,
> Ratu Choraka, the king,
> Unfolds the portrait, looking at her picture,
> Delighting, he desires to have an intimate friendship,
> Observing all over her face,
> As a heavenly nymph (*yatfa*) from the abode (*krayangan*),
> The taste of love is disturbing his heart, comparable to the fire of hell,
> His Majesty (cannot resist), falls down and faints.
> (*INRII* 195)

Regaining consciousness, the king holds the portrait and does not want to put it down. He totally loses his mind, starting to talk, smile, kiss and unconsciously embrace the portrait. At the end, he goes to Lasam and asks his brother to send emissaries to propose marriage with the Daha princess. Unfailingly and without any reluctance, the King of Daha simply agrees.

Meanwhile, Raden Wiyasakam, having received the other portrait of the Daha princess (in full regalia), is possessed by the woman's beauty:

> When
> Wiyasakam, the brave heart…
> Unfolds the portrait, he sees a maiden,
> As a (flash of) golden glass, he feels a thrill of lust (*sieo krasan*),
> Greatly desiring to have a sexual union,
> His heart is shaking terribly.
> He folds the portrait, hiding it in his top,
> His heart is dying, yearning for her,
> He faints on his horse's back,
> (Fortunately) Kamanra could catch him before falling off.
> (*INRII* 210)

His heart burning with an irresistible desire, Raden Wiyasakam shuts himself in his chamber. Thinking that he has been possessed by a wild spirit, the people arrange for a medium to negotiate with the deity. Upon learning of this, Ratu Kamang Kuning decides to ask the princess's hand for his son, unafraid of the prospect of fighting with the four kingdoms. Daha naturally refuses because of the princess's betrothal to Ratu Choraka. Ratu Kamang Kuning thus declares war on Daha, arguing that it was traditionally common to fight over a woman.

On his father's command Inao is now recalled from Manya to fight with the enemy. This is arguably the greatest war in the story, a Java War in a sense, since several

kingdoms takes part: i.e. Kamang Kuning, Pachang (Pajang), Praman Salat (a corruption of *selat*, usually associated with a pirate), Daha, Kurepan, Singhasari, Kalang, Choraka, Lasam (Lasem), and other petty tributary states such as, for example, Burangan. The campaign appears to reflect traditional Thai warfare in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The peasant soldiers are simply conscripted under the corvee system. The best description is of Kamang Kuning's troops:

> The order is given according to the law,
> The commanding lord (*mun nai*) reviews his subjects (*phrai*),
> Which division, or which unit, they belong to,
> Cannot ask for leave of absence, sickness is no excuse.
> Carts having been recruited, logistically loaded
> Provisions, ten *tang*[57] fully for each man,
> Royally conscripted men (*phrai luang*) of any princes were also united,
> Pulled together, heavily congested, with numerous rifles.
> Some provide spears, swords, carriers,
> Scythes, hoes, and clothes;
> Cows, elephants, horses are also rallied,
> Crowded greatly, almost ten thousand in all.
> The outer unit is now preparing a path,
> Constructing the granary, clearing the space for army camps,
> The force is divided to guard
> All the army so that it may proceed safely.
> All the troops are completely organized,
> The *farang* (Westerner) unit is now setting up the canons,
> The chariot is prepared, waiting for his Majesty at the platform,
> The army's inspectors are now busy patrolling.
> (*INRII* 235-6)

The campaign is quite a detailed and colorful scene. The border is attacked, the fighting is tough, and the civilians are fleeing everywhere. At the height of combat, Ratu Kamang Kuning has a duel with Inao. The Ratu is supremely confident that he is indeed a capable warrior, boasting that "Whether Javanese or Melayu *kris* style (*phleng krit chawa*

[57] *Tang* is a Thai weight unit, roughly 16 kilograms for one *tang*.

melayu), I am master of them all, through and through." In the end, though, he is destined to succumb to Inao's potent *kris,* as we see in the following account of the duel:

> Having thought so, [the Ratu] draws his potent *kris*,
> Dancing in a deceitful posture (*rai ram tham kon manya*).
> His right hand holds the *kris*, swaying masterfully,
> His left hand thus holds a handkerchief,
> He clashes with the *kris* violently,
> Moving back and forth swiftly, knowing no fear.
>
> (Intermission of the drum, possibly to heighten the combat atmosphere).
>
> Then,
> Raden Montri (Inao), the skilful warrior,
> The *kris* swaying in his hand, keeps following,
> Be not terrified, or think of only defending;
> Dodging and defending swiftly,
> He moves aside, turning cunningly,
> Clashing, stabbing, feigning, repeating,
> Keeping walking forwards, unconstrained.
>
> (Intermission of the *choet* music, an exciting rhythm).
>
> Having seen the Ratu make a wrong step, and lose his balance,
> Inao sways the *kris*, stabs his breast, pierces him through to his back,
> The Ratu falls down, struggling, losing his strength,
> Losing his life, he leaves the world of suffering (*plot plong*).
> (*INRII* 283)

Meanwhile, the Ratu's son Wiyasakam is also stabbed to death by Sangkhamarata in their duel on horses.

After the war, Inao comes to pay homage to the king of Daha. As his eyes fall on the angel-like beauty of Raden Butsaba, he feels a sudden pang of love for his former betrothed. Inao changes his mind now, thinking that Raden Butsaba is actually his betrothed and that he is the only rightful person to marry her. He tries to find a reason to stay on in Daha and tries to flirt with Raden Butsaba when the king of Daha goes to

perform the annual ritual ceremony at the Gunung Wilitsamara (a slight modification of the name of an east Java mountain, Mt. Wilis).

When the wedding ceremony between Ratu Choraka and Raden Butsaba Nuengrat is prepared, Inao burns down the nuptial festival and part of the city. He carries Raden Butsaba off from Daha, approaches her for sexual consummation and hides her in a secret cave guarded by his men. He then returns to Daha and pretends that he knows nothing. In the meantime, the carriage of Raden Butsaba and her escorts in the forest is carried off by a miraculous wind created by the deity Patarakala as far as the Pramotan kingdom. The deity transforms the princess, giving her a male appearance. He gives her a magical, potent *kris* inscribed with her new name, Raden Unakan Kamanwiyaya Misarenduwa, and also casts a spell so that she and Inao would not recognize each other until there is a reunion of all the other brothers and sisters from the four kingdoms (*INRII* 418-74).

The second half of this episode, especially the cave scene, is much loved in the Thai literary tradition, partly because of a beautiful scene described in an inexhaustible exchange of lovely, coaxing words between the hero and heroine after the misunderstanding, bitterness and the war campaign instigated by the Manya romance. This scene whereupon the two recollect their pasts, their separation, and misdeeds, in order to intensify the romantic conjunction, arguably constitutes the main part of the Thai Panji stories. Evidently, the late Ayutthaya dance performance used to pay great attention to this part, as mentioned by a contemporary poet:

> They sing the story of the Raden who takes,
> Butsaba, his betrothed (*tunangan*),
> Residing in the mountain cave,

Having shared carnal pleasure (*ruam ruedi lom*).[58]

The earlier 1779 version of *Inao*, composed in *chan* meter, was intended also to render only this beautiful scene of sexual consummation.

Episode IV: the Endless Adventure of Desire

Having learned that Raden Butsaba has been carried off, Inao again becomes a forest bandit and his name changes again, this time to Panyi Yaya. His troops plunder and conquer various kingdoms. Fifteen kingdoms/principalities in all become his vassals, and it is notable that the people in one of these kingdoms are practicing Islam (*INRII* 489).

After having wandered throughout all the Java lands (*chon sin phaen din daen jawa*), Inao borrows some vessels from the king of Bali and sails to Melaka, which is explicitly a Melayu kingdom. Having been queried by the Melaka port officials as to whether they come from Surat, Java or Melayu, partly because they are terrified about quite the large number of ships,

> Then,
> Prasanta replies, without cowardice (*mai khet kham*),
> We are the Javanese (*chao chawa*), having tried
> To labor in crossing the sea, to visit the victorious capital;
> Hoping to eat Melaka rice/food (*khao mueang melaka*),
> The Javanese rice/food (*khao chawa*) is boring now, we cannot eat it anymore.
> My master is a forest dweller,
> His name is Panyi, the honest heart.
> (*INRII* 499)

The bewildered Melaka court prepares a reception after they have been informed of Inao's visit. The Melaka atmosphere is evoked by the Melayu outlook and lexical

[58] Maha Nak, *Bunnowat kham chan*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, 334.

elements in the tale such as, for instance, the Melayu king (*raya*), the Persian carpets, clothes of the Melaka style (*attalat phalai melaka*), the Melayu drum (*khlong melayu*), and even the Batavia mirror and glassware (*krachok song khrueang kaeo kalapa*; *kalapa* being the old name of Batavia used in Thai seventeenth and eighteenth centuries manuscripts and maps). Notably, it is only in this scene that the word *raya* is utilized in mentioning kingship (*INRII* 500). Encountering no trace of Raden Butsaba, Inao returns to Java and gives himself to ascetic practice at Gunung Patchangan.

Meanwhile, Raden Unakan (Butsaba) is now transformed into a male and is adopted by the king of Pramotan. But (s)he is greatly lovesick for Inao and also decides to go on an adventurous search, pretending that (s)he is looking for a suitable partner. During "his" wandering, Raden Unakan subdues six kingdoms/principalities in which princes and princesses are presented to "him" as tributes. One day, (s)he arrives at Gunung Patchangan and encounters Inao, who has been telling every one that he is a Melayu from Melaka:

> [Inao] said that, ambiguously,
> We sailed (*chai bai*) from Melaka,
> And came up here to see the forest,
> Having seen that there is a pleasant place here,
> His heart has developed a faith,
> Practicing meditation (*patapa*) for more than a month.
>
> Then,
> Unakan, the graceful,
> Smiles and exclaims,
> "A Melayu transformed to be a Javanese (*Melayu klai pen chawa*),
> Left his nation, converted to this religion!" (*la chat ma khang satsana ni*).
> (INRII 533)

However, because of the spell, they cannot recognize each other's true identity.

This part constitutes the endless journey, which possibly could be described using Adrian Vickers's phrase, "a journey of desire." The journey is detailed with descriptions of flora and fauna, beautiful scenery, and mourning on the part of the lost (*INRII* 474-665). This endless search is described using a specially coined lexicon, which is intended to simulate Javanese sounds. For example "mangum-mangara," which is possibly from *mengembara*, meaning "roaming" or "wandering," in Thai means going on an endless searching adventure without a clear idea of one's direction and destination.

Episode V: the Reunion at Kalang

After the main characters have wandered for some time, eventually they come to Kalang. Having entered incognito into the service of the king and helped in defending Kalang from the attack by the kings of Chamara and Pakalan, the two protagonists eventually become suspicious of each other's true identity. Inao attempts in various ways to be close to Unakan, such as at the cock fight scene. Though it is an essential component of Thai folk culture, and that of Southeast Asia as well, this scene is rather rare in Thai literary texts but artistically portrayed in one panel of the mural painting at Wat Sommanat (Bangkok).

> Both sides make a comparison and put on their bet,
> In the middle of the cockpit, in front of the dais,
> All are huddled together, very crowded,
> The royal page (*kidayan*) signals, sets up the clock.
> Those who are enthusiastic, having seen the cock fighting start,
> The cocks clash, keep close, confront each other,
> They are laughing, clapping their hands,
> Saying, there it goes.
>
> Then,

Prasanta, the blowing tongue, the handsome one,
Having seen his cock taking the upper hand,
Sneers and mocks the opponent.
Do not even think that you would be safe,
Aiming to win, perishing instead,
Cannot withstand more than half of the time,
Afraid that it would say goodbye by half way.

Then,
Tammangong said that, you are only good in mocking,
Do not underestimate an animal such as the cock,
Feather could be withered, but shin is poisonous.
It is not your time yet; do not say it so soon.
There is no signal of its defeat, not the least.
With that word, as he saying so,
His cock strikes with its beak, stabbing with its spur,
Smack right in the middle of its opponent shin (*saniat*),
As the rival is off balance, it hits repeatedly.
Tammangong roars, smack it rightly;
Prasanta simply smiles, disappointed.
The clock mark has fortunately sunk,
All rush to safeguard their cocks.
Tammangong looks at him, asking, who are you?
Prasanta spooks him and comes out.

Illustration 5: Cockfighting in *Inao*, mural painting, Wat Somanat, Bangkok, picture by author, 14 October 2005

> Trying to comfort and calm the cock,
> Freshening it up, washing its face,
> Fanning it, arranging its feathers, blowing its eyes,
> Blood is wiped from its face by a thin cloth.
>
> Having finished freshening it up,
> Trying to avert their disaster by nipping off one of its feathers,
> Snapping one's fingers, carrying the cock and putting it down,
> In the middle of the cockpit at once...
>
> The Panyi's cock is defeated,
> Neck feathers standing, it runs away, shivering.
> The Unakan's followers
> Are roaring with joy.
> (*INRII* 573-4)

Eventually, one of Inao's pages is successful in sneaking into Unakan's private compound and finds out that in fact (s)he has full womanly breasts (*suang teng khreng khrat*) (*INRII* 658). Once his/her real sexuality has been discovered, Unakan pretends to leave for Pramotan and disappears along the way to become a female hermit on Talakan Mountain.

In the meantime Butsaba's brother, Raden Sriyatra, now fifteen, asks permission from his parents to go on a forest trip. Lured by a magical peacock created by the Patarakala, he loses his way to Kalang. Not knowing each other's identity, he falls in love with Raden Wiyada (Inao's younger sister), and eventually succeeds in seducing her to become his wife. Revealing his royal identity by showing his *kris* to Inao, they realize who the other is, and that Wiyada is in fact betrothed to Sriyatra. Meanwhile, the king of Mangada would like to propose a marriage between the Kalang princess and his brother, Raden Surapati. Attempting to get rid of Inao, he sends his men to capture Inao and bring him back to his kingdom, but they take Sriyatra instead by mistake. Luckily, while he is tracking down the Mangada force, Inao's escort Prasanta by chance discovers Raden

Butsaba's hermitage. Having rescued Sriyatra from the Mangada prison with the help of Raden Darawan, the Mangada princess, Inao disguises himself as the deity and tricks Butsaba into coming back to Kalang.

In attempting to bring back Raden Butsaba's memory, a shadow puppet play about their loves and lives is arranged (*cha chamlak nang hai pen rueang ma*). Prasanta lays out the story: it should begin with a sacred ceremony on the mountain, her abduction to the cave, and how the carriage is carried away by the miraculous wind. If she is sorrowful after having seen the play, he says, she must be the princess (*INRII* 776).

The shadow puppet play works and both now fully recognize each other's identity. Inao succeeds in convincing Raden Butsaba to give up her ascetic vows and restore their nuptial relationship. Nevertheless, Inao dares not go back to Kurepan, thinking that his parents and uncles would still be angry with his misdeed and might separate him from Raden Butsaba again. Therefore, Sriyatra and Wiyada secretly send letters to Daha and Kurepan, informing them of the reunion of the two in Kalang. At the denouement of this complicated story, all the kings come to Kalang and arrange the wedding ceremony. Together with the other princes and princess, Inao is married to ten princesses, including Raden Butsaba Nuengrat, Raden Chintarawati from Manya, and his other lovers. Their vassals come to celebrate the marriage ceremony and a great wedding festival is held in Kalang. After the ceremony, the kings return home and Inao sends all the vassal princes back to rule their respective kingdoms and principalities. Finally, all of Java is under his suzerainty (*thang waen khwaen daen chawa anakhet / kreng phra det nop nop sayop sayon*) (*INRII* 1012).

In our exploration of the Panji texts as a possible foundation for the traditional Thai understanding of Java and Indonesia, in this chapter we have first glanced at the influence of the Panji romances in Southeast Asian literary traditions. Not only in Java were these romances popular, but throughout the Melayu world as well. In Thai classical literature, the Panji tales were "translated" and recomposed in the Thai verse form, then swiftly retranslated into a dance performance. Once it was publicly performed in celebrating the Buddhist sacred site around the middle of the eighteenth century, the tale enjoyed a spectacular success. A contemporary poet noted that in seeing the mesmerizing dance, a man wants to die no more.

In Thai literary tradition, there were two main versions of Thai panji texts, namely *Inao* and *Dalang*. During King Rama II's reign, the *Inao* text had gone through a major rework by the court poet's committee. Thereafter, this recension became the main manuscript that was read and performed by students of classical literature and dance performance. Instituted as the literary canon, *Inao* became a school textbook that Thai students have had to read since the early decades of the twentieth century. In the latter portion of this chapter, intending to introduce the flavor of the Thai Panji text, I have offered a fragmented reading from *Inao* coupled with a translation of a few selected episodes. In contrast to the moral doctrines exemplified in traditional literary works influenced by the Buddhist texts, *Inao* offers a story of pleasure and desire. Endless journeys and conquests are thus directed towards a sexual reunion, although this might also imply a new political constellation. Scripted at the moment when a Thai reading culture was taking form and the money economy was emerging, a central theme of desire

had gained exchange value in the economy of literary production. This will be further explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

The Question of Translation:

A Local Concept of Authorship, the *Lingua Franca*, and a Poetics of Communication

Once it was "translated," presumably during the late Ayutthaya period, Inao was promptly transformed into a famous dance performance. The authors, or translators, of the original two Thai Panji versions are, however, unknown. Unavoidably, the anonymity of its authors/translators has sharply raised theoretical questions concerning authorship. In order to tackle this problem, a concept of creative act and prosodic convention in Thai literary tradition is scrutinized in this chapter.

Likewise, as part of a crosshatch of several elements in cultural conjunction, the translation of Panji tales was possible through a certain medium of translation. Since the Melayu *lingua franca* was a medium of crosscultural communication in eighteenth century Ayutthaya entrepôt, it needs to be explored in conjunction with the translation of Inao. Finally, this chapter ends with a reflection upon the central issues of the Inao's mode of translation and its poetics of transcultural communication.

A Local Concept of Authorship

With the the fall of Ayutthaya, the Thai court's literary repertoire was presumably obliterated.[1] A search for the authentic original Thai Panji texts, if there was any, is thus

[1] Prince Dhani Nivat lamented that when Ayutthaya succumbed to the Burmese in the eighteenth century, "Hardly a building, religious or secular, escaped unhurt and almost everything perished in the flames… The whole administration broke down and with it the social frame of the state and the not inconsiderable culture of Ayudhyan Siam was practically obliterated." Regarding the literary works, he said, "the greater part of this

an expectedly failed project. Even the oldest episode taken from the Javanese romance, composed by Luang Sorawichit in 1779 during the last few years of the Thonburi period (1767-82), did not mention the original, but simply said that it was a continuation of the legend (*damnan*) of this Javanese romance (*rueang chawa rak*) in *chan* verse form.[2] The earliest manuscript believed to have been reproduced by King Rama I and his court poets says nothing about the story's authorship; perhaps it was not important enough for them to mention. The only related fact concerning the author is drawn from a coda of another recension of *Inao* composed by King Rama II (r.1809-1824), which says that the original Ayutthaya version of *Inao* was composed by "Chao Satri," literally meaning the princess or even the princess's name.

> An inao ao ma tham pen kham rong
> Samrap ngan kan chalong kong kuson
> Krang krungkao chao satri thoe niphon
> Tae rueangton tokhai phlatphlai pai
> Hak phra-ong song phiphop prarop len
> Hai ram ten len lakhon khit klon mai
> Toem taem to tit pradit wai
> Bamrung chai phrai fa kha phaen din
>
> In producing the Inao story with a song verse (*kham rong*),
> For an auspicious celebrative ceremony.
> Since the days of the old capital, the story was composed by "chao satri,"
> But the original version was lost.
> Now the king who rules this earth has a flippant opinion,
> For dancing and theatrical performance, a verse style should be reworked,

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having presumably disappeared since the fall of Ayudhya. In days prior to printing such a catastrophe was easy to come about for most of the best in writings probably existed in manuscripts centred around the headquarters of the administration." See Prince Dhani Nivat, "The Reconstruction of Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty," in *Collected Articles by H.H. Prince Dhani Nivat: Reprinted from the Journal of the Siam Society* (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1969), 146 and 153.

[2] Luang Sorawichit (Hon), *Inao kham chan* [Inao in *chan* verse form], reprinted in *Wannakam samai thonburi* [Literature of the Thonburi Period], 2 volumes (Bangkok: Kromsilapakon, 1996), vol.1, 268.

> Extending, embellishing, binding, and adorning,
> In order to raise the people's morale.
> (*INRII* 1012)

As might be expected, Prince Damrong Rajanubhab - the principal authority on Thai history, who during the reign of King Vajiravudh became the Director of the State Library (*ho phrasamut samrap phranakhon*) and "played the major role in collecting, classifying, safeguarding, and later reproducing in standardized form" the Thai literary heritage,[3] offered an explanation of the origins of the Thai Panji stories. According to a "kham lao" (hearsay), said Damrong, there were two Ayutthaya versions of the Thai Panji stories, the *Dalang* and the *Inao*. Both were composed by the two daughters of King Borommakot (r.1733-58), namely Chaofa Kunthon and Chaofa Mongkut, who born of the royal consort of the King, Chaofa Sangwan. These two princesses, continued Damrong, begot the Panji stories from their "Melayu" royal maid (*khaluang*) who was a descendant of a prisoner of war from Patani.[4]

Around the middle of the nineteenth century Adolf Bastian, while in Cambodia studying its literature, was told that the Panji tales had been brought to Ayutthaya by a certain "Yaiyavo," a Muslim woman, and that the story had been translated from "Javanese" into Siamese by "Prince Chao Kasat-kri."[5] Bastian's information definitely

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[3] Patrick Jory, "Books and the Nation: The Making of Thailand's National Library," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, vol.31, no.2 (September 2000): 351-373, 352.
[4] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao* {1921}, 308.
[5] Adolf Bastian, *Die Völker des Östlchen Asiens* (Jena, 1868), vol.IV, 345. In German text, he said, "Das Epos Inao wurde durch Yaiyavo, eine moslemistische Frau, nach Krung Kao (Ayuthia) gebracht und dort von dem Prinzen Chao Kasat-Kri avs der sprache ü bertragen, um bühnengerecht zu werden." This sentence could be rendered as "The Epic Inao was brought to Krung Kao through Yaiyavo, a Muslim woman, and translated for the Prince Chao Krasat-Kri in order to make it adequate for performance [in a theatre]." I owe this translation to my German friend, Susanne Fohr, in Jogja, June, 2005.

sheds light on the nature of the transmitter of these Panji stories. “Yaiyavo” or “Yai Yavo” (for the easier understanding of the Thai language component), literally means Granny Yavo. Meanwhile, Yavo could be a real proper name, or could also mean her place of origin, the Yavo women - most likely the Javanese. However, Yavo could also signify the Patani people, because there is a common habit of calling the Patani Melayu “Orang Yawi,” the Yawi people.

There is also a high probability that the Thai Panji stories might have been transmitted by Javanese people, who happened to form a sizeable element of Ayutthaya society. How this fact or notion was introduced into Thai literary studies is interesting. Prince Dhani Nivat himself was quite faithful to his view that “the epic INAO was brought in by Yaiyavo, a Moslem woman, to Ayudhya and thereafter translated from Javanese into Siamese by Prince Chao Kasat-kri for presentation on the stage.”[6] Nevertheless, his work was modified, or arguably distorted, by some scholars. For instance, anxious to prove the *Inao*’s Melayu origins, Titima Suthiwan curiously relates in her Ph.D. dissertation that “Adolf Bastian, in his 1868 book called *Die Völker des östlchen Asiens,* reported that Yawo, the two princesses’ maid and herself a Malay prisoner of war from Patani, was the one who told the princesses the story.”[7] It is not Yaiyavo now, but simply Yawo. Likewise, the Muslim woman in Bastian’s account is curiously substituted with a Melayu maid, a war prisoner from Patani. Patently, this

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[6] Prince Dhani Nivat, *Prawat Thao Worachan lae wichan ruang khaomul nithan inao khorng thai* [Biography of Thao Worachan and the Origin and Venue of the Siamese Tale of Inao] {1941}, in *Chumnum niphon khong krommuen phitthayalap pruettiyakon* [Collected Articles of Prince Dhani Nivat] (Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand, 1964), 240; and his “Siamese Versions of the Panji Romance,” *India Antiqua, A Volume of Oriental Studies* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1947), 101.

[7] Titima Suthiwan, “Malay Lexical Elements in Thai” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1997) 50.

literary phantasm is due to a literary conjecture and has nothing to do with Bastian's work.

The problem discussed above raises questions concerning the very concept of authorship in eighteenth century Siam. The uncertainty surrounding the *Inao*'s authorship is strikingly reminiscent of an ethnographical observation by Rosalind Morris. She says that for those who are familiar with the post-Romantic perception,

> [T]he revision and even rewriting of another composers' work might seem to threaten the very concept of authorship, but it was common in Thailand at this time. One may glean from this fact that 'authorship' in mid-nineteenth-century northern Thailand was conceived as being a complex technology of writing at the boundary between repetition and newness rather than an originarily creative act.[8]

Morris's observation is insightful but, not having probed deeply enough into Thai history, she is not sensitive enough to the historical shifts in the nature of authorship or creator of literary work in the Thai literary tradition. This "tradition," far from being monolithic from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century, had experienced an irreducible rupture at a certain period, and had produced a multiplicity of literary genres and styles.

In "Siamese Verse Forms in Historical Perspective," a paper presented at the conference on Southeast Asian Aesthetics, Cornell University, in August 1978, William Gedney observes that "Poetic artistry in Siamese verse finds expression within the constraints imposed by the various verse patterns. So much of the value of Siamese poetry lies in the form, as opposed to the semantic content, that translations into Western languages are notoriously disappointing."[9] In another essay, he states:

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[8] Rosalind C. Morris, *In the Place of Origins: Modernity and Its Mediums in Northern Thailand* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 22.

[9] William Gedney, "Siamese Verse Forms in Historical Perspective," in his *Selected Papers on Comparative Tai Studies*, edited by Robert J. Bickner, John Hartman, Thomas

> Traditional Thai poetry was composed in a number of different forms, each with many subtypes. All are characterized by rigid constraints on syllable count and rhyme; in some types there are also tonal constraints. Rhyme is external (required) or internal in the line (optional but frequent). External rhyming usually involves not, as in English, rhymes at the end of lines (though in some forms this also occurs), but rather what might be called a linking rhyme, in which the last word of a line rhymes with some word, usually one occurring fairly, in the following line.[10]

For Gedney, this "musical effect" in traditional Thai poetry is "often, even in the finest works, pretty much the whole story." It is not originality, therefore, but "the way that it is said that makes it so fine."[11] In an early nineteenth century renowned poet's phrase, "a taste of speech is delicious at heart" (*rot thoi aroi chit*).[12]

The idea of originality is, thus, quite different from our modern perception of such. It rests upon the author's manipulation of sound rather than plot or theme. In the Thai literary tradition, this concept of versification would be best exemplified in a book called *Cindamani*, which literally means "gems of gems," "gems of thought," or "wishing stone." At the very opening of the work, the author Phra Horathipbodi states quite clearly that he intends to show or represent only an example of the 'letters/words' that learned men had written (*akson prat thaeng wai*) and of a proper usage of these letters/words

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John Hudak, and Patcharin Peyasantiwong (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1989), 489.

[10] William Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, edited by Thomas John Hudak (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1997), 40-41.

[11] Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, 41. For a discussion on the musicality of voice in the Javanese *Wayang* performance, see Jan Mrazek, *Phenomenology of a Puppet Theatre: Contemplations on the Art of Javanese Wayang Kulit* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2005), 269-295.

[12] Sunthorn Phu, "Nirat phukhaothong" [A Journey of the Golden Jetiya], in *Chiwit lae ngan khong sunthon phu* [Life and Works of Sunthon Phu] (Bangkok: Soemwit, 1975), 155).

semantically (*hai chop tham sap*). He then displays some homonymous lexicons, mostly in Pali and Sanskrit, followed by an explanation in verse form about the usage of some confusing consonants and vowels. A lot of pages, then, are used to explain the phonological components of language, i.e., consonants, vowels, and tonal symbols, how to construct a unit of phoneme, and how to generate sounds in accordance with the three-tone system (*akson thang lai nan hai phan ok pai tua la 3 kham*, literally all consonants could be inflected or generated into three words). According to Phra Horathipbodi, by generating each phoneme within the three tones of sound, the poet can choose the euphonious sound most suitable for versification within constraints in composing poetry.[13] He said, in the *khlong* verse-form poem,

> Thangni kham prat klaeng/ klao bot
> Rang klao klao klok phot/ riaproi
> Phiang thip sutharot/ songsot chaina
> Fang reng sano phro thoi/ thithuan thuk kham
>
> Through these words, the learned men pretend/ to polish their verse.
> Properly pronouncing the words/ neatly and gracefully;
> Which are like the ambrosia/ sprinkled on and delighting the heart.
> The sounds are melodies to the ear/ carefully produced in every word.[14]

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[13] Horathipbodi, *Cindamani*, reprinted in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya* [Literature in the Ayutthaya Period], 3 volumes (Bangkok: Kromsinlapakon, 1992), vol.2, 441 and 456. Observed from a Thai internal linguistic tonal structure and its development through poetic works, Gedney suggests in his presidential address for the 193rd annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, John Hopkins University, Baltimore, 22-23 March 1983, that the Thai language formerly had a three-tone system and "in olden days poets composed according to sound, using one or another of the three tones at particular points in the line or stanza. Nowadays only the highly literate can appreciate or compose in these meters. Originally, it is now clear, the poets did not even have to be literate." Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, 102-3.

[14] Horathipbodi, *Cindamani*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.2, 460.

Throughout the text, a lot of effort is spent on explaining how to produce a proportional sound in the tonal system, especially in explaining the various *khlong* verse forms. Most of all, the rhyme making is repeatedly emphasized as a focus of versification:

> Let embroidering the legend/myth,
> Legend/myth of exposition/description,
> Legend/myth of polished verse/poem,
> Let it be a kind of verse that needs to bind,
> Let it be a teacher in letter form,
> Let it be in *khlong*, *kap*, or *klon* verse forms,
> Having to rhyme from the beginning to the end…
> *Kap* and *klon* have to rhyme closely/together;
> Make it close, link/relate, and bind.[15]

This concern with how to produce a proper sound would become more complicated in the eighteenth century when the Thai language experienced a changing internal structure in which its tonal system was changed from a three to five tone system. In 1732 another textbook bearing exactly the same title as *Cindamani* appeared. This was the first linguistic meditation totally devoted to articulating the new five-tone system and its phonetic signs, and seems to have written in response to the great irritation and discomfort that the new linguistic changes must have generated among the literati in general. Its author reasons that there are some queries about this five tone system because the Thai language formerly consisted of three tones only (*duai songsai kan mak dauiwa doem nan akson thang lao ni mi tae mai ek tho pen lao lae 3 kham*).[16] This linguistic

[15] Horathipbodi, *Cindamani*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.2, 461.
[16] *Cindamani khrang phaendin phrachao borommakot* [Cindamani, Another Version from King Borommakot Reign], in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 78-101, 82.

transformation or modification was a remarkable moment in Thai literary history, but this text was to go unnoticed even by the astute linguist, Gedney, who took great pains to research the three tone system.[17]

Far from attempting to establish a unified system of correct spelling, as is sometimes assumed, the abovementioned changes constituted an extremely important linguistic achievement in generating a transcription system that could reflect the changing normal speech act. Furthermore, they provoked a concern for how to make the writing system produce a proper euphonious sound with a syntactical sense in poetry. Whilst plot and theme could be drawn or copied from the same source, the difference between a distinguished and mediocre poet would lie instead in his or her skill in producing euphonious sounds with a syntactic sense. The story could, thereby, be reproduced, but seemingly not the same pattern or style of euphonious sound. Sunthon Phu once wrote in one of his poems,

> May I leave my words in a scriptural form (*kho fak pak kham tham nangsue*),
> Let my name be endured (*suep chue*) until the end of this world,
> Sunthara, a scribe, [of] the lord of the universe (*chao chakkraphan*),
> Of his Majesty, the King of the white elephant.
> Beside, to those who criticize like mad,
> Then simulating my words accordingly (*thiap kham tham akson*),
> May s/he become insane (*fanfuean*) as I have cursed in my poetry.
> Only s/he who acknowledges my name could be of great repute.[18]

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[17] In one of his papers, "Patrons and Practitioners: the Chakri Monarchs and Literature," presented at the Rattanakosin Conference, Northern Illinois Univesity, 11-13 November 1982, Gedney raised the question, "What were the sources for the long narrative poems composed in the first two reigns, for example the Rama and Inao epics? The usual view is that these works were attempts to recreate or reproduce texts that were lost when Ayutthaya was destroyed. But there appears to be *no evidence that the* klon *verse form was used before the Thonburi period; it cannot be ancient, because it depends upon the modern five-tone system*." Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, 152; emphasis added.
[18] Sunthon Phu, *Chiwit lae phon-ngan khong sunthon phu*, 475-6.

The same work could, thus, be reproduced from fragmented manuscripts or memories for preservation, or reworked in a different verse form in order to improve upon the earlier recension. The same manuscripts could even be "refined" or "polished" over and over again in terms of their wording or euphonious sound. Original works that were reproduced or reworked were not kept, nor, they must have thought, should they be when they already had a better one. For a lot of works, the authors are anonymous. But anonymity was sometimes unintentional. For example, the author of *Lilit phralo*, a beautiful romance composed during the early Ayutthaya period, remains very doubtful: "Maharat chao." Though it would have been recognizable during his lifetime, this "name" opens up considerable conjecture as to whether he was a king or whether he was just an official holding that title.[19]

The function of the proper name as the creating subject of a literary work has gradually been emerging since the eighteenth century. In contrast to the earlier period, authors in the late Ayutthaya period generally opened or closed their literary texts by pronouncing the author's name in the preface or epilogue, including religious texts. Almost everyone "signed" their names in the preface or the epilogue. For example, Luang Sorawichit closed his two works, *Lilit petmongkut* [Ode of the Jeweled Crown] and *Inao kham chan* [Inao, a Chan verse] in the late 1770s with his proper name. Nai Suan, the royal page, opened his famous chronicle work, *Khlong yo phrakiat phrachao krung thonburi* [Eulogistic Ballad for King Taksin], with his proper name in the very first

[19] See *Lilit phra lo* [Prince Lo, a Lilit verse], reprinted in *Chumnum rueang phra lo* [Collected Works on Prince Lo], edited by Rewadi Thitalohit (Bangkok: Kromsinlapakon, 2004), (7).

line.[20] Seemingly, this tendency became more apparent in literary works composed during the early Bangkok period. In a rather proud manner, for example, Sunthon Phu had shamelessly claimed that:

> Like myself, whether good or bad,
> Having passed away, still my name will be renowned (*tae chue khao lue chao*).
> As a scribe, a bastard (*nakleng*) poet, who crazily composed a ballad song,
> Well recognized in Cambodia, Laos, and even in Nakhon (Si Thammarat).[21]

This poetical change could be related to an emerging perception of exchange value instituted by economic changes in the eighteenth century. With an emergence of a nascent money economy, the mode of exchange had become influential in everyday life practice and gave any product of labor work an exchange value. Thereby, most religious treatises from the late eighteenth century claimed authorship, as a token of the merit making which the author in turn would use as an exchange-value in bargaining for a possibility of *Nirvana*. In some works related to the Buddha's preaching, rather than keeping himself anonymous the author sometimes uses his own name to accumulate a unit of merit-making accountable towards, or exchangeable with, a path to enlightenment. In one of his religious poetry, Prince Thammathibet trades his work for enlightenment (*orahan samret*).[22] Likewise, Luang Phricha (Seng) expresses his desire at the beginning of a tale utilizing his inventive plural verse forms, i.e. the *Siriwibunkit*, that his work be

[20] See *Wannakam samai thonburi* [Literature in Thonburi Period] 2 volumes (Bangkok: Kromsinlapakon, 1996).
[21] Sunthon Phu, *Chiwit lae phon-ngan khong sunthon phu*, 549.
[22] Prince Thammathibet, *Phramalai klonsuat* [The Reverend Monk Named Malai], reprinted in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 161-187, cited from 186.

recognized until the end of the five thousand year span of Buddhism and let him attain enlightenment (*phothiyan*) in his final life.[23]

Scripted at the early moment of the institution of subject-author in the Thai literary tradition, the author of *Inao* was posited in between royal identity and individual authorship: her royal identity was well recognized, albeit seemingly anonymous. Instead of disclosing the author's identity, our query on *Inao's* authorship casts light upon another dimension of the text: the intermediate role of the Melayu language. In order to tackle the question of Melayu as medium, we shall explore next the ethnoscape of the Ayutthaya entrepôt.

Melayu as a Lingua Franca in the Ayutthaya Entrepôt

Unintentionally, Prince Damrong's speculation on the question of the *Inao*'s authorship opens up another interesting dimension, that is, the medium of its translation. Remarkably, his opinion parallels Richard Winstedt's suggestion that the Panji tales were brought to Siam through "a Malay medium."[24] Damrong's opinion sheds light on other meanings about a history of intercultural contact and communication in Southeast Asia, at least during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Taking this stand as a point of departure, the nature of this medium should be interrogated more thoroughly, especially the role of the Melayu *lingua franca* in Ayutthaya and its relations with other Southeast Asian states.

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[23] Luang Pricha (Seng), *Siriwibunkit* [Tale of Prince Siriwibunkit], reprinted in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 377-440, cited from 378.
[24] Richard Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 53-4.

With a foreign-outlook, Panji stories disclose a crucial moment of intercultural contact and its conjuncture. Every version of the Thai Panji tales contains frequent utterances in foreign tongues, both Javanese and Melayu. All these strange words stubbornly come onto the scene and some lexicons are very hard to make sense of for an ordinary Thai audience.[25] During his exile in Bandung in 1938, Prince Paribatra had translated a Panji tale from the Melayu text which originally came from a Javanese manuscript (*ton chabap kao pen nangsue phasa chawa*) called "Panji Semirang." In a preface, he wondered whether the Panji stories came to Thai society via the Javanese or the Melayu people. In any case, he was certain that they were transmitted by a certain mode of translation (*khong cha mi lam plae*). He conjectured (*dao*) that these translators could be from either the Melayu people from southern Thailand or southern Thai people who could speak Melayu, because of the high-tone dialect in their pronunciation (*siang phan pen chao nok*) of the Javanese and the Melayu lexicons, which is unusual among the Javanese people themselves.[26] Apart from featuring a foreign outlook or a Javanese appearance, the Javanese and Melayu tongues helped to mark the crucial moment in Thai society and its traditional literature of, in Bakhtin's words, "its entrance into international and interlingual contacts."[27]

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[25] For a lengthy linguistic treatment of these Melayu lexicons, see Titima's Ph.D. dissertation.
[26] Prince Paribatra, *Inao* (Bangkok: the Cremation Volume of Prince Paribatra, Rongphim aksonnit, 1950), ngo-ngu.
[27] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 11.

Apparently, the emergence of Melayu as the *lingua franca* among merchants and traders was not exclusive to archipelagic and peninsular Southeast Asia.[28] The office of foreign affairs at the court of Ayutthaya had also adopted Melayu as a *lingua franca* in communicating with the outside world. Since the early sixteenth century, when the Portuguese sent their first envoy to the Ayutthaya court in 1511 after their success in taking over Melaka, the Melayu language was first registered as a medium of international contact and communication, possibly both in its spoken and written forms. Almost at the end of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese governor of Melaka sent his delegation and his letter, "written in Malay," to King Naresuan in 1595.[29] In the seventeenth century, when the letter from the Dutch Stadholder Prince Frederick Henry to King Songtham arrived in Ayutthaya in 1628, "In accordance with the usual procedure, the letter was translated from Dutch into Portuguese, from Portuguese into Malay and from Malay into Siamese."[30]

The Melayu language was evidently one of the main languages in the Ayutthaya foreign office. Traditionally, the "Phrakhlang" or the Treasury Office that took charge of foreign relations and trade was divided into two departments: One was the "Kromtha Sai" (literally, the Left Port Department), which was in charge of trade and diplomatic relations with China and Vietnam, or those located to the left side of the gulf of Siam. The other department was the "Kromtha Khwa" (literally, the Right Port Department),

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[28] See H.M.J. Maier, "From Heteroglossia to Polyglossia: the Creation of Malay and Dutch in the Indies," *Indonesia*, no.56 (October 1993): 37-65.
[29] Dirk Van der Cruysse, *Siam & the West, 1500-1700*, translated by Michael Smithies (Chiang Mai: Silkworms, 2002), 9 and 23-5.
[30] Han ten Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat: A History of the Contacts between the Netherlands and Thailand* (Lochem-Gent: Uitgeversmaatschappij de Tijdstroom, 1987), 18.

which was in charge of trade and diplomatic relations with the Indian Muslim, the Arab, and the Melayu, or those that were located on the right side of the gulf. While officials of Left Port were all Chinese and Vietnamese, officials of the Right Port usually were Muslims whom Thai people called "khaek" (*khon chuasai thi thua satsana (mahamad) thi thai riakwa khaek*).[31]

According to the Code of the Civilian Offices and Titles, presumably enacted during the King Trailokanath reign (r.1448-88) and recompiled during the reign of King Rama I, the Right Port Department, under the directorship of Phra Chula Ratchamontri, had three divisions:

First was the Office of Khun Ratchasetthi, the "Palat" (Deputy of the Department) which sometimes also functioned as the "Chaotha" (literally, the Port Authority, similar to the *shahbandar*),[32] which was in charge of the "Khaek" from "*prathet chawa melayu ang-grit*" (Java, Melayu, and Britain). Within this division, there were four translators -- Muen Phinitwathi, Muen Srithongphasa, Muen Satchawathi, Muen Samretwathi -- who presumably used Melayu as their medium.

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[31] King Mongkut's Ordinance on the Appointment of Luang Wisut Sakhondit as the Port Authority or *Chaotha*), quoted in Chulitphong Chularat, *Khunnang kromtha khwa: kan sueksa botbat lae nathi nai samai ayutthaya thueng samai rattanakosin, ph.s.2135-2435* [Officials of the Right Port Authority: A Study of their Roles and Functions during the Ayutthaya and Bangkok periods] (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn, 2003), iv-v. The term "*khaek*" in Thai could mean "Muslim," the "foreigner," or "guest," depending on the specific context. For a fine though arguable treatment of this word, see A.V.N. Diller, "Islam and Southern Thai Ethnic Reference," in *The Muslims of Thailand: Volume 1, Historical and Cultural Studies*, edited by Andrew D.W. Forbes (Bihar: Center for South East Asian Studies, 1988).

[32] In 1632, when Anthonij Caen was commissioned to negotiate with the Ayutthaya court, his record mentioned that the "interpreter" was also the *shahbandar;* see Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, p.20. This *shahbandar*, or "Chaotha," is definitely one of these three Port Authorities of the Right Port Department, and this means further that anyone who is the "Chaotha" must have been well versed in Melayu.

Second was the Office of Luang Ratchamontri, the "Chaotha," which was in charge of the "Khaek" (here meaning "foreigners") from Britain, Vietnam, and possibly any Westerner (*prathet ang-grit yuan farang*).[33] It consisted of two "English translators" attached to this division: Muen Thipwacha and Muen Thepwacha.

And third was the Office of Luang Nonthaket, also the "Chaotha," which was in charge of "Pram thet" (the Brahman country, or the Brahman of/from the Thet, possibly Hindu people from southern India). In this office, there were two translators, possibly using one of the Indian languages: Muen Satchawacha and Muen Satchawathi.[34]

There is some confusion, however, because there were also the "Chaotha" or the Port Authority in charge of the "Wilanda" (the Dutch) under the directorship of Luang Joduek Ratchasetthi.[35] Thereby, it seems that those Westerners that traded with the left side of the gulf of Siam used a Chinese translator, while the Westerners that traded with the right side of the gulf used a Muslim as their translator.[36] The existence of the English translator in the foreign office during the Ayutthaya period seems doubtful. According to King Mongkut's ordinance, the main translators in the Ayutthaya port authority and foreign office had been Chinese, Indians, Arabs, and Melayu.[37] During the early Bangkok period, these officials were slightly changed to include an Indo-Iranian, a

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[33] "Farang" is the general Thai term for all Westerners, possibly deriving from the Persian term "feringhi," meaning "Franks" or "Westerners." According to the earliest Ayutthaya document, this term was probably firstly used by the governor of Tenassarim in granting commercial facilities to the Danish captain in 1621, see Van der Cruysse, *Siam & the West, 1500-1700*, 58-9.
[34] *Kotmai tra sam duang* [Code of the Three Seals], Thammasat Universtity Edition, 3 Volumes, revised edition (Bangkok: Pridi Banomyong Institute, 2005), vol.1, 130-1.
[35] *Kotmai tra sam duang*, vol.1, 131-3.
[36] Chulisphongs, *Khunnang kromtha khwa*, 80-1.
[37] King Mongkut's Ordinance on Appointing of Luang Wisut Sakhondit as the port authority (*chaotha*), quoted in Chulitphong, *Khunnang kromtha khwa*, 87.

Portuguese, and an English translator. The first English translator was appointed during the reign of King Rama II (r.1809-1824), i.e. "Joseph," a Portuguese descendant who could speak a little English but mainly conversed in Latin and Portuguese. During King Mongkut's reign (r.1851-1868), the first fully fluent English man, i.e. John Bush (a British merchant), was then appointed to that position and was in charge of receiving the "kingdom's official guests" (*khaek muang*) and the European merchants.[38]

Evidently, it was not only in communicating with the Melayu world that Melayu was employed. It was also used as a medium in communicating with the South Asian world, as is apparent from an episode during the reign of King Borommakot in which the Ayutthaya court sent two Buddhist envoys to restore Buddhism in Sri Lanka in 1752 and 1755.[39] In the first envoy, apart from the six "*phrai melayu*" (the Melayu common folks), there were two official translators, i.e., "Muen Wichitwathi" and "Muen Chaiyaphasit."[40] While the former is quite congruent with the title of Muen Phinitwathi, the Melayu translator in the office of Luang Ratchamontri, the latter is not close to any official title in the Civilian Code mentioned above. However, Muen Chaiyaphasit had been attached to both envoys and became the only translator of the second envoy. He was possibly of Dutch ancestry since he was able to translate from Dutch during the first envoy's visit to

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[38] Chulitphong, *Khunnang kromtha khwa*, 112 and 326.

[39] See the journals of both missions in Prince Damrong, *Rueang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong nai langka thawip* [On the Restoration of the Siamese Buddhist Order in Sri Lanka], first published in 1916 (Bangkok: Matichon, 2003), 195-263 and 264-282. For a Sri Lankan account, see P.E.E. Fernando, "An Account of the Kandyan Mission sent to Siam in 1750 A.D.," *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, 2,1 (January 1959): 37-83. For the Dutch account of this mission, see Bhawan Ruangsilp, *Dutch East India Company Merchants at the Court of Ayutthaya: Dutch Perceptions of the Thai Kingdom c.1604-1765* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, Tanap Monographs on the History of the Asian-European Interaction, 2007), 194-9.

[40] Damrong, *Rueang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong*, 199-243.

the port of "Yaikatra" (Jayakarta or later Jakarta) on their way to Sri Lanka, and during the second voyage he was mentioned as translating the conversation between "Hresdene" (the Dutch Captain) and the Buddhist Monks before the shipwreck.[41] Meanwhile, in the correspondence written in Pali from the Ayutthaya minister to the Sri Lanka minister in 1756, the Charge d' Affairs (*uppadut*) of the second envoy was "Wichitwathi," which is also close to the title of the Melayu translator.[42] This role of the Melayu *lingua franca* in communicating with the South Indians was still evident during the early Bangkok period, especially in the elephant trade between the port of Trang on the west coast of southern Thailand and a few ports of southern India in which the "Khaek" language (apparently Melayu) was used as the medium of their contact zone.[43]

Melayu was used not only within the foreign office, but may also have been the main medium of communication among the various foreign communities in Ayutthaya. As a multicultural metropolis by the seventeenth century, Ayutthaya attracted merchants of various ethnicities to conduct trade and live there. Chevalier de Chaumont, a French diplomat who came to Ayutthaya in 1685, recorded that "there is no city in the Orient where one sees so many nationalities as in the capital city of Siam and where one speaks so many different languages."[44] Simon de La Loubère was told by his informants that there were forty foreign nations in Ayutthaya, though he could not count more than

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[41] Damrong, *Rueang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong*, 200 and 269.
[42] See both the Pali text and its translation in Damrong, *Rueang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong*, 285-343, cited from 306-7.
[43] See the journal of the Buddhist mission to Sri Lanka during the King Rama II reign in Damrong, *Rueang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong*, 356-416.
[44] Excerption from Chevalier de Chaumont, *Relation de I'Ambassade de Mr le Chevalier de Chaumont à la Cour du Roi de Siam* (Paris, 1686), compiled and translated by Michael Smithies, *Descriptions of Old Siam* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995), 42.

twenty-one.[45] Among them were the Persians and the Moors, the Melayu, the Makassarese, the Javanese, the Cham, and other Southeast Asian natives who had converted to Christianity. Of those Persian and Moor people in Ayutthaya, Fernão Mendes Pinto noted during his three years there in 1626-9 that they already had seven mosques and comprised three thousand households.[46] A Melayu quarter was even mentioned in a 1687 Ayutthaya map, located in a southwesterly direction outside of the city walls, next to the Makassarese (Bugis) quarter.[47] In De Chaumont's words, "The Malays are quite numerous, but most of them are slaves… The Makassarese and *many people of the Island of Java* are established here, likewise the Moors. Included in the latter are Turks, Persians, Mogols [sic], Golcondans, and Bengalis."[48]

Thai records also refer to a residential area of Muslims in which the Javanese and the Melayu traded their commodities.[49] Certain laws issued during the Ayutthaya period also recognized this plurality. One law issued in 1763 addressed the problem that, because there were many people from various countries (*nana prathet*), i.e. Westerners, British, Dutch captains, "Khula" (Bengalese), Javanese, Melayu, "Khaek" (Muslim), Kuai, and Kaeo (Vietnamese) (*farang ang-grid krapitan wilanda khula chawa melayu khaek kuai kaeo*) who were prosperous and wealthy, many Thai and Mon people were marrying off their daughters to those "heathen" people (*mitcha thiti*), and sometimes even converted to those "heathen" religions. Interracial marriage and sexual intercourse with

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[45] Simon de La Loubère, *The Kingdom of Siam* {1693} (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 10-11.
[46] Van der Cruysse, *Siam & the West, 1500-1700*, 16-8.
[47] Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680, Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis* (Chaing Mai: Silkworm, 1993), 81.
[48] Smithies, *Descriptions of Old Siam*, 42. Emphasis added.
[49] Srisak Vallibotama, *Krung Sri Ayutthaya Khorng Rao* [Our Ayutthaya City] (Bangkok: Matichon, 2001), 83-4.

"heathen" foreigners were strictly forbidden, out of fear that these foreigners might become involved in espionage on the country's affairs and might molest the kingdom and adversely affect the Buddhist religion.[50] The kingdom, however, being a Buddhist polity where it was theoretically inappropriate to act against the tenets of the religion, regularly used Muslims as political weapons in harming potential political enemies who had taken refuge in the Buddhist monkhood. For example, after his success in outmaneuvering his rival in 1703, King Borommakot sent a certain Cham Muslim (*khaek cham*) to assassinate the main supporters of his rival, i.e. Phraya Phichairacha (Sem) and Phraya Yommarat (Phun), who were now ordained in the monkhood.[51]

It is evident that Muslims (*khaek*) were a constituent part of the Ayutthaya scene until its final days and that they even made a great effort together with the Chinese, Europeans (*farang*), the Mon, the Lao, the Thai themselves and even the criminals (*nai chon nao song*) to defend the collapsing capital.[52] Among the thirty-two ethnic groups described in the first ethnographic inscription on the temple wall at Wat Pho in Bangkok (1831) in which their cultural practice, religion, clothes, hair style, complexion, and special skills were represented, the Melayu was also depicted here as the Muslim. They were the people who read the Koran (*mulut*) and practised their faith in the mosque (*surao*). Usually, they would carry the *keris* and a short spear at their waist, wearing a

[50] *Kotmai tra sam duang*, vol.3, 105 and 159-160. Jan Mrazek suggests that "khula chawa" could also be a Javanese term that means the Javanese subject.
[51] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya: the British Museum Version* (Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco and Toyo Bunko, 1999), 486.
[52] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya*, 525.

"tabit" cloth on their head, and living in the cities of Yaring (in Patani), Perak, Kedah, and Bugis (*yaring paerai trai mungit*).[53]

Even down to the middle of the twentieth century, the Melayu were still an important and integral feature of the western coastal dredging mines in Southern Thailand. Some rose to the rank of chief foreman, who was required to speak in various tongues in order to communicate with the local workers and his European superiors. This is dramatized in a recent film, *Mahalai mueang rae* (The Dredging Mine University) that featured Phi John (Brother John), - a Norwegian-Melayu mestizo who was born and educated in Penang but worked mostly in southern Thailand. In the film, he jumps on a dredging ship and speaks fluently and flawlessly in English to the South Indian laborers, in "Kwang Tung" (i.e., Cantonese) to the Chinese, in southern Thai dialect to the locals, and in Melayu to the Melayu.[54]

It is not the ethnicity of the translator but rather the medium of translation that reallly matters in understanding the transmission or translation of the Panji tales into the Thai literary space. As there was a significant Javanese community in Ayutthaya, it is quite likely that Melayu was then used by the Javanese themselves in communicating with the Ayutthaya people. During the coup instigated by King Narai (r.1656-1688) against his uncle King Srisuthammaraja in October 1656, the main supporters of his

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[53] See *Phrachum charuek wat phrachetuphon chabap sombun* [Inscriptions at Wat Phrachetuphon Temple: the Complete Volume] (Bangkok: phanfawitthaya, 1967), 771-87.

[54] *Mahalai mueang rae* [The Dredging Mine University], a film directed by Chira Malikun, 2005; based on a collection of short stories written in 1950s by Achin Panchaphan, *Mueang rae* [The Dredging Mine], 2 volumes (Bangkok: Matichon, 2005), vol.1, 501-8.

movement were the Muslim communities from the Right Port Department, e.g. Phra Ratchmontri, Miraya [Mirza] Fan, Muala[na] Makmoh (Tad), Phra Chularatchamontri. Most notably, among them were Raya Lila and Sri Tuan who commanded the "*khaek chawa*" (Javanese Muslim) and the "khaek cham" (Cham Muslim).[55] Likewise, the main supporter of another rebellion in the later period of King Narai's reign was a sizable number of Makassarese/Bugis mercenaries.[56] Their fierce fighting became stuck in a memory of the Thai elites until the early Bangkok period; the Makassarese thus became a representation of the barbaric giant (*yak makkasan*) or the cruel mind (*chai mungit*) in some literary writings.[57] Moreover, when Ayutthaya became one of the major rice suppliers for Batavia in the mid-seventeenth century, there were a large number of Dutch company vessels visiting Ayutthaya; 86 visits were registered in 1646-1650 alone.[58]

In his letter to Père de la Chaise in 1686, Phaulkon, who was still a top official at the King Narai court, reported that during his mission to Java, Luang Chula had received letters from "the princes of Java and of the neighbouring islands." Hearing that Luang Chula was in Batavia, they "wrote to him and begged him to intercede for them with the king, whom they asked for his protection to free them from the tyranny of the Dutch,

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[55] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya*, p.307. Smith mentioned that among the King Narai's supporters were "the Japanese-Thais, Pattani Malays, and perhaps Persian Muslim" without any mentioned to those Javanese and Cham people is discrepant with the Thai source; see George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand* (Northern Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1977), 35.
[56] Of the Makassarese's revolt in Ayutthaya, see John O'Kane, *The Ship of Sulaiman* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 135-8.
[57] See, for example, *Si thanonchai samnuan kap* [Si Thanonchai, in a Kap verse form], introduction by Suchit Wongthes (Bangkok: Matichon, 1997), 55.
[58] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 34-5.

since the latter burn their boats to prevent them from sending envoys to Siam."[59] It is plausible that they might have been in regular contact for some time before that incident and Siam might have been favorably regarded by the Javanese elites, especially in dealing with their Muslim followers who had come to trade or settle in Ayutthaya, thereby asking for protection from Dutch tyranny. Meanwhile, the Ayutthaya court was rather well informed about the political situation in Java. King Prasatthong once had a query about Sultan Agung's plan to besiege Batavia and wrest it from the VOC in 1632.[60] In 1687, almost the final year of his reign, King Narai sent eleven young men to Batavia to be trained in various crafts such as, for example, joinery, lock-making, brass-founding, blacksmiths, and so on.[61] It may have been these men who came back and were successful in building a large ship that was capable of loading thirty elephants during the reign of King Tai Sa (r.1709-33).[62]

From the seventeenth century onwards, the Ayutthaya court had continually maintained a gift exchange with Batavia.[63] During the last century of the Kingdom's existence, i.e. from 1688 until its collapse in 1767, it had frequent contacts with Java since the Dutch eventually became the only Western trading partner to retain its factories in the kingdom. According to Brummelhuis, "the Company merchants had become a

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[59] E. W. Hutchinson, *Adventurers in Siam in the Seventeenth* Century (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1940), 232-3.
[60] Dhiravat na Pombejra, *Siamese Court Life in the Seventeenth Century as Depicted in European Sources* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn Press, 2001), 114.
[61] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 43.
[62] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya*, 474-5.
[63] For an account of the seventeenth century of such disastrous gift-exchange war, especially for the Batavia, see Leonard Blusse, "Queen among Kings: Diplomatic Ritual at Batavia," *Jakarta-Batavia: Socio-Cultural Essays*, edited by Kees Grijns and Peter J.M. Nas (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2000), 25-41; Dhiravat, *Siamese Court Life in the Seventeenth Century*, 122-45.

permanent fixture at Ayutthaya."[64] Brummelhuis describes King Phetracha's (r.1689-1708) extensive intercourse with Java as follows:

> In 1698 King Phetracha sent 48 of his subjects to Batavia, some of them to reside there and carry on trade, and some to go to Surat, Coromandel and Bengal on the Company's ships and purchase textiles and horses. It became increasing common for Siamese merchants or the King's factors to voyage to places in India on Company ships. And for decades, *the King's horse-buyers were mentioned as visiting Java every year*.[65]

In 1702, the King sent forty men on a horse-buying expedition to Java, bringing with them two elephants among other gifts as presents to Amangkurat II (r.1677-1703). A year later, he asked for assistance from the VOC in order to bring "Javanese women dancers" from the Mataram court. The outcome of this request is unknown, since the Dutch Governor-General was not enthusiastic to help and considered the king's demands to be "burdensome,"[66] and possibly also because of the First Javanese War of Succession (1704-8). Dhiravat na Pombejara adds this very interesting comment about King Petrarcha:

> [A] French missionary document written by Gabriel Braud, also dating from the end of this reign, mentions that the old king liked to watch young girls dancing, even dancing with them too…. It is intriguing to speculate that direct cultural or artistic ties between the Siamese and Javanese courts may have existed at this juncture.[67]

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[64] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 41.
[65] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 43; emphasis added.
[66] Dhiravat na Pombejra, "Javanese horses for the court of Ayutthaya: a preliminary study" (unpublished manuscript, Kyoto, November 2003), 9-10. I am really grateful to him in sharing this information with me. See also Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants at the Court of Ayutthaya*, 171-2.
[67] Dhiravat, "Javanese horses for the court of Ayutthaya," 10.

To return to the subject of the Inao tales, there are a number of explanations as to how the Javanese tales came to be disseminated to Ayutthaya. They may have been brought either by Thai people who had lived in Java for a length of time, by Melayu residents in Ayutthaya, or even by the Javanese people in Ayutthaya themselves. Recently, a few scholars, possibly with Melayu nationalist sentiments, have taken great pains to argue for the dissemination of these Javanese tales to Ayutthaya through the Melaka and the Patani courts.[68] But why couldn't the Javanese themselves have done so? As witnessed by the Bolognese Ludovico di Varthema, the majority of Melaka habitants in the early sixteenth century were "Giavia" or Javanese.[69] If the Javanese were willing to take a long voyage through the Java Sea to Melaka or Patani, why could they not have sailed a little further up to the much larger and prosperous city of Ayutthaya?

It is clear that there was a considerable number of Javanese residents in Ayutthaya in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and that the Ayutthaya court regularly sent dispatches to Batavia and even to the Mataram court. It would be rather peculiar for these people who seemed to dine, trade and converse with each other in daily life, both in Ayutthaya and in Java, to only interest themselves in the "serious matters" of profits and royal commissions. Surely they must have spent time enjoying themselves in entertaining performances. Some poor souls had event spent more than a year in Java or plied the naval route that was regularly used as a "highway" by the Thai court to control its southern vassals during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. So how can some scholars imagine that the wretched Thai readership had to wait until their army was sent

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[68] Among other, see Rattiya Saleh, *Panji Thai Dalam Perbandingan Dengan Cerita-Cerita Panji* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka, 1988), 179-82.
[69] D.G.E. Hall, *A History of Southeast Asia*, 4th edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 259.

to Patani and took the Melayu back to Ayutthaya as prisoners of war, before they had the good fortune of being introduced to these Javanese romances? The evidence suggests otherwise. Close contact with Java, for example, had induced a seventeenth century Thai poet to picture a Javanese fighting dance as one of the main entertainments in the Thai court's festival. The poem, *Samutthakhot kham chan*, reads:

> "I am Patimanoro/ from Thomomasu,/ the Javanese.
> With a spear I kill/ many, it's true./ With skill, I spear.
> You and I, we'll raise swords,/ discover our strength/ soon. Don't slip away."
> "I'm Patiali/ from Java./ They say/ I'm brave and courageous.
> I subdued the Javanese, my fame spreads./ I returned to Mueang Thai/ to show my skill and agility.
> If you boast and brag/ you're the brave one,/ we'll battle one another."
> Then the two took the field,/ fighting, thrusting,/ swinging spears aloft.[70]

However, it is not my intention here to be assertive about its origin. It is apparent that the Thai versions share several motifs with the Panji tales in the Melayu world. The crucial point is that these people apparently communicated, and translated, in Melayu. As James Siegel has argued, "Melayu was the language of the plural society, used between 'natives' speaking different local languages and between them and Indos and Dutch. It was the tongue that connected most of the 'native' world with Europeans and European cultures as well as the rest of the world outside their local communities."[71] As a *lingua*

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[70] Maharatchakhru, King Narai and Prince Paramanuchit, *Samutthakhot khamchan*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya,* vol.2, 127-8; Thomas John Hudak, *The Tale of Prince Samuttakote: a Buddhist Epic from Thailand*, translated, annotated, and introduced by Thomas John Hudak (Athens, Ohio: Southeast Asian Studies Series, Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1993), 23-4.

[71] James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 14.

franca, the language that belonged to no one, a lot of Melayu lexical elements were left untranslated in the Thai Panji versions.

"Question of the Tongue" and a Poetics of Communication

Though somewhat different to the confusion in the "tower of Babel" that represents an "irreducible multiplicity of tongues," the Thai Panji tales are no less significant in invoking the "question of the tongue."[72] In every Thai Panji recension I have consulted, foreign language is prominent throughout the text, and in the conventional Thai literary tradition these foreign signifiers were generally claimed to be Javanese lexical elements. This persistent character of the Thai Panji texts carries within itself the double possibility of literary polyphony and communicative failure.

According to the treatise of versification, *Cindamani*, those who would like to compose poetry should know various foreign tongues, including Khmer (*kamphut*), Sinhalese (*singhon*), Burmese (*phukam*), Northen dialect (*hariphunchai*), Mon (*taleng*), and Pali.[73] Apart from various sounds generated by the tonal system, this multivocality is obviously a linguistic phonological technique to produce proper euphonious sounds by means of special vocabularies that could help to rhyme with a proportional syntactic sense, while retaining prosodic restraint.[74] Phraya Anuman Rajadhon once commented that Khmer and Pali words in traditional Thai literature are "introduced freely into

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[72] Jacques Derrida, "Des Tours de Babel" in *Difference in Translation*, edited with an introduction by Joseph F. Graham (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), 165-6.
[73] Horathipbodi, *Cindamani*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.2, 475.
[74] For the linguistic techniques of euphonious sounds in Thai poetry, see Thomas John Hudak, *The Indigenization of Pali Meters in Thai Poetry* (Athens, Ohio: Southeast Asian Studies Series, Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1990), 28-44.

literary language merely for *euphonic purpose* in poetry, ignoring the different shades of meaning when a prefix or an infix is added."[75] Nevertheless, this multivocal exchange in traditional Thai literature needs to be treated properly. It does not help much in understanding traditional Thai poetry to simply assign the possibility of intralingual movement in "the presumption of a divine connection between word and thing" and the "overnaming" of things as suggested by Rosalind Morris.[76] Rather, in order to understand the substitutability and interchangeability of words and languages in traditional Thai poetry, one has to incorporate the socio-historical space of its emergence.

In a commentary to his translation of one of the oldest Thai poems, *Lilit ongkan chaeng nam* (Curse on the Water of Allegiance), composed for the ceremonial oath of allegiance held twice annually since the Ayutthaya period until its elimination in 1932, Michael Wright said that this poem is a "compound text." It consists of plural literary texts as a crosshatched conjunction of various sources (*prakop khuen machak wannakam lai chin lai haeng*) and contains the multivocality of the Brahman, the Buddhist, the local spirits, and the Ayutthaya bureaucrats.[77] Though this ceremony had been adopted from Cambodia since the founding of Ayutthaya, it is strange to note that this poem completely eliminates the Cambodian tongue, which is rather different from other poems written for ceremonial purposes that are influenced by Cambodia. The earlier versions of *Chan dutsadi sangwoei klom chang* or "poem written for recitation during the elephant taming

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[75] Quoted in Hudak, *The Indigenization of Pali Meters in Thai Poetry*, 26; emphasis added.
[76] Rosalind Morris, *In the Place of Origins: Modernity and Its Mediums in Northern Thailand* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 24.
[77] Michael Wright, *Ongkan chaeng nam* [Curse on the Water of Allegience] (Bangkok: Matichon, 2000), 44.

ceremony," usually performed after new wild elephants have been captured, are composed in *Chan* verse forms that are heavily encrypted with Pali and Khmer words.[78]

Definitely, Khmer words have played a crucial role in the language and literary culture of the Thai court. Honorific lexicons used in speaking to or writing about the King are heavily dominated by Khmer and Pali words. Some stone inscriptions from ancient times are engraved in the Thai, Pali, and Khmer languages, using Thai and Khmer scripts. In Buddhist studies, for example, the Tipitaka and its commentaries and other treatises on religious or political meditation, were usually written in the Pali language with the Khmer script, not in Thai language and Thai script until the late eighteenth or even early nineteenth century.[79] Apart from Khmer, Pali and Sanskrit were a major influence. Much of traditional Thai literature is based on texts of Indic origins, especially the Jataka tales and the Rama epic that came with the influence of Buddhism.[80]

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[78] See Bunthuean Sriworaphot (ed.), *Khamchan dutsadi sangwoei, khamchan klomchang khrang krungkao, lae khamchan khotchakammaprayun* [Chan verse for Soothing the Elephants] (Bangkok: Kromsinlapakon, 2002), 55-61.

[79] Nidhi, *Pen & Sail*, 270-4.

[80] Apart from the Indic origins of traditional Thai poetry, another major source of inspiration was the indigenous tales written in the Pali language on the model of the Pali Jataka, i.e. *Panyatsa jataka* (literally, Fifty Jataka Tales). These tales were compiled and composed by monks some time between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, or even earlier in the thirteenth century, in the northern Thai principality. As Gedney has observed, some of these tales were "the basis for some of the finest Thai poetic narrative and dramatic poems"; see Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies*, 23. A survey of its influence in Thai poetry has shown that, at least 63 versions of traditional Thai literary works were reproduced from 21 tales of the *Panyatsa jataka*. In fact, because of its popularity, the original text itself was expanded later into 65 tales; see Niyada Lausunthorn, *Panyatsachadok: prawat lae khwam samkhan thi mi to wannakam roikrong khong thai* [Pannasa Jataka: Its Genesis and Significance for Thai Poetry] (Bangkok: Maekhamphang, 1995), 40-51 and 133-248. See also Thomas John Hudak, "From Prose to Poetry: the Literary Development of Samutthakote," in *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, edited by Juliane Schober (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997).

The intralingual movement described above does not simply rest on the presumption of a divine connection between words and things, and between the Pali language and truth in the premodern cosmologies of Thai Buddhism.[81] In spite of the tradition that the Buddhist canonical texts and commentaries had to be written only in the Pali language, i.e., to tie the meaning closely with what the Buddha had said, it is essential nevertheless to vernacularize the Pali scriptures in order to communicate with the local populace.[82] Since this region had been dominated by Khmer power and culture, and the Khmer language was able to retain some of its hegemony in high literary culture, these Pali canonical texts had thus to be inscribed in the Khmer script, and the Thai elite down to the nineteenth century still had to be well versed in the Khmer language in order to read or write about Buddhism.

Instead of trading this intralingual movement within the sacred currency of truth and logos as Morris has attempted, it seems that the substitutability of words and languages can be better comprehended in the light of the multi-ethnic nature of Thai society since the beginning. Within the multiplicity of this ethno-space, the linguistic general form was still working to complete its grammatical system and language was far from unified. Objects in a daily speech act were thus represented by various tongues in accordance with the social structure that required such usage.[83] In contrast to the sacred linkage between word and thing suggested by an ideal language articulated by a universal grammatical norm, the "thing" is rather carnivalized with signifiers drawn from various

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[81] See Morris, *In the Place of Origins*, 24-5.
[82] See, for example, Patrick Jory, "A History of the *Thet Maha Chat* and its Contribution to a Thai Political Culture" (Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1996), 22-4.
[83] For a discussion of the world languages in the perceived world of the early Bangkok elite, see Nidhi, *Pen & Sail*, 243-5.

sign systems that were working within a sociohistorical multiplicity of names and definitions in Thai society.

The literary situation had, however, changed by the late Ayutthaya period. In his study of the history of Thai literature, Nidhi suggests that a transformation in the eighteenth century of the Thai mode of economic production during the late Ayutthaya period influenced Thai literature, both in terms of its plot structure and the internal logic of its narration. From a self-sufficient economy that traded in export-items drawn mainly from the levy-in-kind system (*suai*, tax paid in exchange for the government service in the corvee system), Ayutthaya's source of wealth slowly gravitated towards the money economy and export-oriented production. Meanwhile, elite culture also expanded. Court literature written in sacred Pali words was in decline, whilst a mass culture of oral performance infected the elite's literary production. A new form of verse emerged, i.e., *klon*. Traditional sources of the reading culture were exhausted, and new inspiration was sought after. Within this socio-historical context, the Sanskrit tales, the Persian tales, and the Javanese tales emerged and would inspire other literary productions or reproductions.[84] This concentration on novel plots and stories was a rather new phenomenon in Thai literary history. The concern now was not just with morality tales abiding with Buddhism, but any tale from any source.

For instance, the Sanskrit tales, Sivadas's *Vetala Pancha-vinshati*, were firstly translated into Thai in *klon* verse form during the late Ayutthya period, called *Wetan pakoranam*.[85] It was a tale drawn from this new source that Luang Sorawichit, a poet of

[84] Nidhi, *Pen & Sail*, 3-57.
[85] "Wetan pakoranam" [Tales of Vetala], in *Prachum pakoranam* [Collected Tales], vol.1 (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1963), 259-336. The manuscript of these tales were found and

great repute during the early Bangkok period, reworked and rendered as *Lilit Phet mongkut* (Ode of the Jeweled Crown), with *rai* and *khlong* verse forms, in the late 1770s. In his opening, Sorawichit states, "I would like to compose a *lilit* based on an olden mythic tale in the *Pakaranam wetan*, the Vetala Panjavusti" (*khoi cha niphon lilit/ doi tamnan nitburam/ nai pakkaranam wetan*).[86] Meanwhile, the Persian treatise on political wisdom was also translated in 1753 by Khun Kalayabodi, a Muslim official in the Right Harbor Department responsible for trade with the Western and Muslim countries. They were called *Nithan iran ratchatham* (literally, Iranian Tales of the Royal Pieties).[87] These tales were evidently reproduced on royal command in 1782 and this version was later inscribed on a Bangkok temple wall, Wat Phrachetuphon.[88]

Euphoniously, the constellation of foreign tongues employed in Thai literary texts conveyed the imaginary atmosphere of the Javanese tale in which the characters are supposedly talking with each other in a foreign language, "Javanese". By playing around with the technique of manufacturing "Javanese" and "Melayu" sounds, the conversations are circumscribed within a *fictive* cultural boundary that contains within itself different cultural practices and linguistic systems that cannot be carried beyond its imagined

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published after Prince Phitthayalongkon had published, in 1918, a translation of some parts from these tales he had rendered from the English version translated from Sanskrit by Sir R. F. Burton, see Richard F. Burton, *Vikram and the Vampire, or Tales of Hindu Devilry* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1870).

[86] Luang Sorawichit, "Lilit phetmongkut" [Ode of the Jeweled Crown], in *Wannakam samai Thonburi* [Literature of the Thonburi Period], vol.1 (Bangkok: Kromsilapakon, 1996), 145-231, 153.

[87] *Nithan iran ratchatham (rue thi riak kan wa nithan sipsong liam) chabap khwam khrang krung si ayutthaya* [Iranian Tales of the Royal Pieties (or the Dodecagon Tales), the Ayutthaya Version] (Bangkok: Sophon phiphatthanakorn, 1929).

[88] "Nithan iran ratchatham" [the Iranian royal wisdom], first published in 1870, reprinted in *Prachum pakoranam*, vol.1, 1-71.

linguistic borders. When the main protagonists voyage beyond that fictive frontier into another realm of cultural practice and another linguistic system - apparently here the Melayu world in Melaka - the narratives are set within a multivocal atmosphere. The audience is, thus, assumed to hear these figures speak in different languages, i.e., Javanese and Melayu, and simultaneously cannot understand each other. Though Thai classical literary texts are multivocal, as mentioned earlier, this was the first time that the Thai audience had to read presumably in a narrative of imagined multivocality where the characters could not understand each other's language and were represented as being in a linguistic situation of communicative failure even inside the text itself (see below).[89] This marks a structural change in classical literary narratives in the eighteenth century.

The possibility of communicative failure immediately raises the question of the mode of translation in which these Panji stories were translated or transmitted into eighteenth century Ayutthaya. Since there are certain Javanese and Melayu elements in the Thai Panji tales it seems plausible, as some people have claimed, that its "origin" might have been the Melayu world. However, the search for the story's origins seems pointless and doomed to failure. Though these stories might have originated from and been intertwined with Java, but they were widely disseminated in oral and written forms throughout Southeast Asia and especially in the Javanese- and the Melayu-speaking worlds. The conventional conception of translation, i.e., the transmission of the original from a foreign tongue into one's own, might need to be rearticulated in order to understand the local practice of translation.

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[89] The best account of communicative failure in Southeast Asia is provided by Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

In the practice of translating the Panji stories in eighteenth century Ayutthaya, it seems that the translator had no intention of going back to the original in order to reconstruct the "intended effect upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original."[90] Nevertheless, untranslatability and incommensurability govern the act of translation. In these stories of unknown origin, the encounter with the untranslatable had apparently encouraged the deployment throughout the Thai Panji texts of untranslated signifiers referring to linguistic systems lying elsewhere. It is also possible that these free-floating signifiers had eventually gained some currency in Thai society to the point that it seemed unnecessary to translate these signs into the Thai semantic system.

In our attempt to disclose a process of intercultural contact at a prosperous port of eighteenth century Southeast Asia, it has been necessary to meditate on a mode of translation in which signifiers were left outside its sign system. This persistence of a foreign tongue in another semantic system reminds us of what Derrida once suggested: "If the translator neither restitutes nor copies an original, it is because the original lives on and transforms itself. The translation will truly be a moment in the growth of the original, which will complete itself in enlarging itself."[91] A translation without the original that seems to govern the act of translation of the Panji stories into Thai poetries would be, thus, a peculiar growth of the original. In short, it was a multiplicity of the non-existent original entity that could grow endlessly. Here, the conception that best describes the local translation practice would be, as Meaghan Morris suggested, "translation as a

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[90] Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator" in his *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 76.
[91] Derrida, "Des Tours de Babel," 188.

practice producing difference out of incommensurability (rather than equivalence out of difference)."[92] Varieties of the Panji stories could thereby be encompassed and re-emplotted into a singular text that embodies or reflects the intertextuality of the Panji stories' genre. In other words, the translation helps to establish a common theme and to locate varieties of these tales within the main plot.

In the preface to his translation mentioned earlier, Prince Paribatra observed that everyone who traveled to Java could not resist searching for and investigating the Panji stories in order to compare them with the Thai version (*khrai ma thueng ko chawa chueng wen maidai thi cha suepsao ruengrao thiap kap nangsue nan*). Nevertheless, this Flâneur-like enterprise of pursuing the original (*rueang ton khao* or *khao rueang doem*, literally 'original story') was rather unfruitful (*mia su dai phon*). As for the Panji version he had translated, apart from its congruence with Thai versions in terms of Javanese and Melayu lexicons, toponyms and character names, the plot (*nuea rueang*) was definitely different to any Thai version (*mai trong kan thang nan*). At this moment, Prince Paribatra notes an interesting conception of translation practiced in eighteenth century Ayutthaya and, possibly, in other parts of Southeast Asia as well.

The reason for this difference between the Thai versions and other Javanese or Melayu versions, Prince Paribatra states, is not that the transmitter (*khon thi nam rueang khao pai*, literally the person who had brought the story in) was a lunatic (*fanfuean*) and could not recollect the story (*cham rueang mai dai*), and thereby told/related (*lao*) a distorted story that was different from the original. This would be incorrect (*hen cha mai*

[92] Meaghan Morris, "Foreword," in Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), xiii-xiv.

pen kan thuk tong). Intrigued by other possibilities, Paribatra wonders whether there existed various original versions of the Panji tales or a different mode of translation altogether. With reference to the latter, he suggests that ultimate responsibility for registering the difference in translation/transmission lay in the original audience(s)/receiver(s) of these Javanese tales in eighteenth century Ayutthaya. After transcribing the stories in written form, Paribatra explains, the receiver of these tales (*phu rap fang rueang*) might be of the opinion that the original plot was not exciting enough (*mai sanuk pho*), so he/she thus had altered it rather freely (*chueng dat plaeng sia tam chopchai*, literally "changing it according to whatever delights his/her heart").[93]

With the growth of the original freely altered and reproduced according to a different mode of translation, the translation became more or less "a production of difference." Such literary reproduction in Thai classical poetry influenced, as we have seen, by neighboring literary repositories, sheds light on Southeast Asian cultural praxis, i.e. the local mode of accommodation with the foreign knowledge and its translation practice. In the colonial situation in which knowledge needed to be translated from the imperial language to the native tongue, translation was always a slippage, because the imperial signified was not commensurate with the native signifier. For example, Reynaldo Ileto and Vicente Rafael have shown that imperial signs representing the native by imperial agents, e.g. the missionaries, were fished out by the native and were read differently from the imperial intention, in accordance with the local "idiom of experience" and sign system. Hence, the passion of the Christ was read against the grain of Spanish domination and became a sort of subversive ideology for liberation and justice

[93] Paribatra, *Inao*, kokai-khokhwai.

among the natives, completely in opposition to the imperial intention. Meanwhile, the Christian ritual of confession, the imperial logic of civilizing mission, was shockingly used to negotiate with God. Instead of consolidating imperial hegemony, translation became a site of ambiguity in which the imperial discursive power was eventually turned against itself.[94]

The translation of Javanese tales in eighteenth century Ayutthaya was, thus, a crosshatch of several elements in cultural conjunction. Woven into it were the various different versions of Javanese tales, Melayu as a medium of communication, Ayutthaya as an entrepôt of different cultures, Batavia as the colonial headquarters of a remote outpost of the Dutch empire, the mediumship of the translator, and the poet(s) who would reproduce these tales as Thai literary texts. Clearly, what we find articulated in Thai versions of the Panji tales is a conceptual representation of these cultural contacts set within a certain cultural framework and linguistic boundary. Though Melayu-ness and Java-ness were highly fluid,[95] certain conceptions of the Melayu-ness and Java-ness, however, functions as the frame of the narrative in Thai versions.

To give an example, as a coastal Muslim state, Melaka works throughout the texts as a significant frame of cultural reference. And this frame appears very sharply with sexual connotations in a certain episode where Javanese characters sail up to the Melayu

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[94] Reynaldo Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution***:** *Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Querzon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979); Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1988).
[95] See, for example, Timothy Barnard (ed.), *Contesting Malayness: Malay Identity across Boundaries* (Singapore: SUP, 2004).

Kingdom.[96] In all the main Thai versions, this Melaka episode was terrestrially and culturally framed within a certain conception of boundary and the characters were depicted as voyaging beyond the territory of Java (in Thai, "*sut daen chawa*" (*DL* 863), "*sin khwaen phaendin chawa*" (*INRI* 145), and "*chon sin phaendin daen chawa*" (*INRII* 590).

In both the main texts of *Inao*, i.e., the fragmented version composed by King Rama I and the complete version composed by King Rama II, where the Melayu language begins, Javanese definitely ceases to function as a medium of communication. Melaka, as a representation of the Melayu language and culture, is beyond the boundary of Javanese culture and language and unavoidably leads to the collapse of linguistic communication. In the words of Raden Sangkhamarata (one of the main protagonists), Melayu is beyond his comprehension: "I do not know her language (*phasa kanlaya*)" (*INRI* 155).

[96] In the Balinese Malat, Wiranantaja, younger brother of the lost princess of Daha, had gone in search of her to the kingdom of "Sabrang Malayu" and was adopted by that Melayu king. When he came back, lands at Tuban, he is called "Prabu Malayu." See Vickers, *Journeys of Desire*, 23.

Illustration 6: Inao's Voyage to Melaka, mural painting at Wat Somanat, Bangkok, Muang Boran's Collection

In order to grasp fully the process of communicative failure in *Inao*, let us now turn to a detailed explication of the Thai Panji texts and a closer look at the hero Inao. After paying a lavish visit to the Melaka court, Inao, fully dressed in his princely attire and now disguised as a forest criminal, returns to his ship. That night, drawn by his irresistibly attractive appearance during the royal procession, a young Melaka girl, Wan Yiwa, makes a call to his ship with the clear intention of a brief flirtation with Inao. Below is a free-hand translation of the scene from the fragmented version of King Rama I (*INRI* 154-7), supplemented by the detailed version of King Rama II.

Here comes the story of
Wan Yiwa, the young girl,

A daughter of the Tumenggong.
When she saw that Panyi was already returning,
Secretly, she opens the window and casts her eyes on him.
Having fallen in love,
Till he disappears from sight, thoroughly miserable,
Her heart greatly desires to befriend him.

In the King Rama II version, having caught sight of Inao, Wan Yiwa, the daughter of a high ranking Melaka official (the Tumenggong) simply cannot restrain her desire. Suddenly, she fells madly in love with his appearance (*rup song*; literally, features and figure), his princely grace and sexually attractive features. She is full of desire for intimate friendship (*ranchuan khruan khrai pen maitri*). At last, she totally loses her senses (*ranchuan khruankhrai pen maitri, nonnang tangtae taluenglong*) (*INRII* 506).

When night falls, she takes a bath and cleans her body,
Her face and hair.
She sprinkles herself with a nice perfume,
With a flower flagrance.
Dressing herself with clothes of ruby color,
Elegant as a mystic nymph.
After her father falls asleep, she secretly escapes,
With a slave at hand.

This short, two-stanza passage in the King Rama I version was expanded to include details about her clothing and beautification, e.g., how she applies to her body the fragrant sandalwood powder, sprinkling it with flower perfume from South Asia (*nam dokmai thet*), fastening the golden belt, putting on earings adorned with *tanyong* flower and valuable gems, dressing in refined cloths from Patani, wrapping herself in a glittering gold and purple shawl, and wearing on her finger a big diamond ring (*INRII* 506).

She arrives at the shore, and gets into a boat,
Rowing her boat to the [Javanese] ship.

Suddenly she becomes uncomfortable,
Not knowing what to say (*phinphan mi dai phati*).

By that time,
Prasanta comes to inform Panyi:
I saw a woman in the boat,
Possibly, a lady came.

When Panyi has heard of this, he orders him,
"Brother, go to tell Sangkhamarata,
He should take her in, do not let her go back emptyhanded."

Then, Prasanta goes to inform Sangkhamarata,
"Today you are really lucky,
A great fortune has come to your Highness,
Raden Panyi has granted a present to you,
Her name is Wan Yiwa,
You should receive this beauty at once,
Now, she is still in her boat."

Sangkhamarata replies,
"[But] I do not know her language (*phasa kanlaya*).
When she speaks in Melayu (*cheracha melayu*),
How could I converse with her?
I am quite anxious and ashamed (*otsu*),
That I do not know how to talk.
Could you please tell her to go away?"

In King Rama II's version, Sangkhamarata's speech/words are slightly different and more intriguing to quote. He says that her language is not similar to theirs (*chueng wa phasa mai muean rao*). Since she speaks in Melayu, how could he have had a conversation with her? (*khang khao cheracha melayu, cha phathi duai nang yangrai*). Aware of the difference in medium of communication and incapable of enunciating in her language, he has an intense bout of fear and humiliation. Based on the limited numbers of manuscripts left following the Burmese sack of Ayutthaya in 1767, this was very likely the first introduction to the eighteenth century readership of a phantasm of communicative failure, and possibly together with it, sexual impotence as well. Such

response towards a foreign tongue envisioned by the local people intermingling in the plural society of the port community at Ayutthaya is rather different from the notion of internal multivocality[97] in which elements of polyphony are said to be a constituted component of Thai society. This linguistic anxiety is brought into sharp focus in the very context of its cultural conjunction. Possessed by anxiety resulting from communicative slippage, Sangkhamarata thus declines to have sexual contact with her and asks Prasanta to chase her away (*INRII* 507).

> Prasanta said that
> Though her language could not be understood,
> If you cannot speak, you do not have to.
> The food is already at your mouth,
> You should not make trouble for the servant.
> Buying with incessant haggling (*sue thaem nep name kaem ma*);
> You do not take the goods, even if they are offered to you for free.
> Prasanta thus repeatedly urges him to take [what is offered].
> It is useless to avoid it,
> You should try [to have a sexual experience] as a lesson.
> When known, surely you will always ask to go with me.
>
> Sangkhamarata then replies that,
> I will try to talk with her.
> Laughing, he then takes his leave.

[97] For a discussion of the multivocality in Thai poetries, see Morris, *In the Place of Origins,* 20-7.

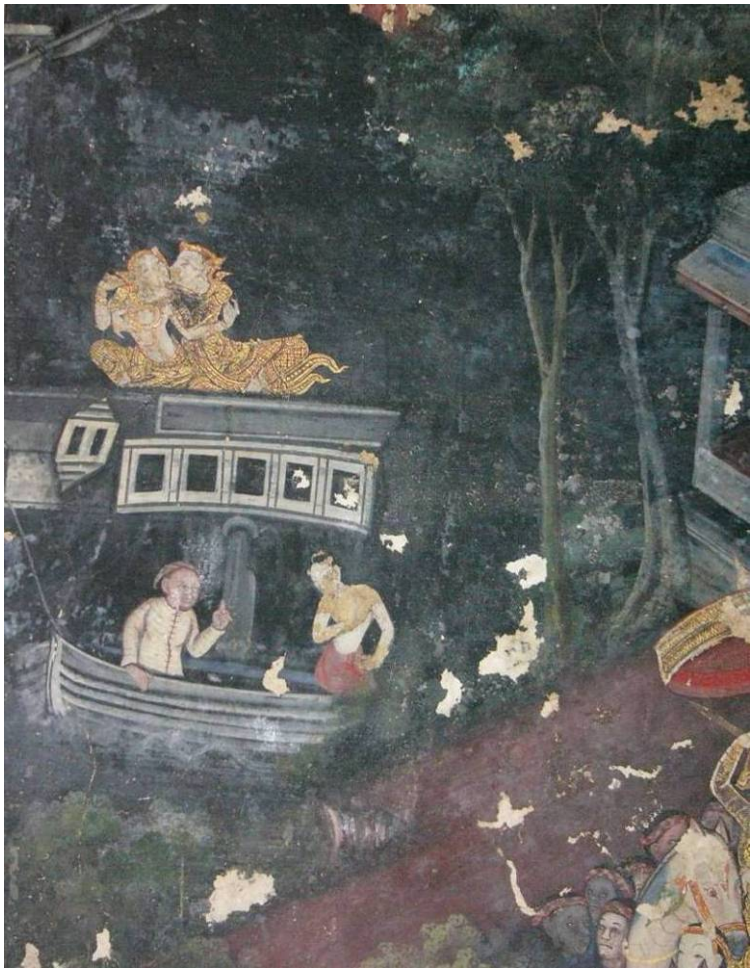

Illustration 7: Sangkhamarata and Wan Yiwa, in Melaka, Mural painting
at Wat Somanat, Bangkok, picture by author, 14 October 2005

Arriving at the little boat, he carefully gets into it,
Sits down close to her and says:
"Please, my darling and sweetheart (*kaewta yachai*),
Go aboard the ship.
Why do you not answer my request?
Taking a glance and avoiding my face."
He thus takes her hand and,
Brings her up to his bedroom (*hong banthom*).

The Prince then coaxes
The young beautiful girl:
"I have seen you through the window,
And waited for you until night.
Because I intensely prayed for it,
You therefore came.
You shall not resist me anymore,
Please speak with me.
Definitely, the Javanese and the Melayu girl

Would easily know [the meanings of] each other's language.
Please do not think and make it hard for your body,
You should have sympathy for me, my beloved."

In another version, Sangkhamarata complements Wan Yiwa for coming because he would like to see a girl of foreign tongue (*nuannang tang phasa*) and because her beauty surpasses all the Javanese beauties. Then he brings her to his bedroom on the ship. When he attempts to approach her and runs into resistance, he convinces her that at the end a Javanese and Melayu girl could learn each other's language with ease (*an chawa kap nang melayu, pho cha ru phasa kan ngai-ngai*) (*INRII* 508).

So saying, he fondles her,
Arousing her desire,
Kissing her chin and her cheeks
Her flowery fragrance indeed delights his heart.

"Oh, please, my beloved,
You should not take the liberty to assault me.
Let me down and do not take my hand.
Why do you not understand my words?" (*wa yang rai mai chaeng wacha*).
She now tries to leave, but behaves affectedly.
"Surely, this woman would soon be in disgrace.
Definitely, I have made a mistake in getting here.
Having already seen your ship, I should take my leave."

While the fragmented version above reveals Wan Yiwa's query regarding a failure of communication (i.e., "Why do not you understand my words?"), the King Rama II version portrays her reaction differently. There Wan Yiwa just listens fascinatingly to Sangkhamarata's speech in Javanese but simply cannot understand its meaning (*fang phut phasa chawa pai, mai khao chai nai rot wacha*) (*INRII* 508):

"Oh, my beloved,
Do you not want to share my love (*phitsamai*, lit. love, joy, or adoration).

> Though we do not share the same language (*phit phasa*) which may not please you,
> In love and desire (*saneha alai*), we are the same.
> Come, let me teach you Javanese (*ma phi cha son chawa hai*),
> When all is clear then you could take your leave."
> In saying so, his body leans towards her uncontrollably,
> Craving to have sexual release (*krasan sanit chit chom*).
> He kisses her hair, eyes, breasts, and caresses her face.
> Taste of love, first experience of carnal knowledge (*rot rak raek ru su som*).
> His hands embrace and entwine with her body,
> Her beauty is comparable to the moon.
> The clouds are flashing with lightning and trembling with a loud noise,
> Thunder bolts roar in the sky,
> The rain is falling, and the sky is now bright.
> The Bumble bee is flying and swooping over,
> Bathing and immersing in the fresh water,
> Taking pleasure in copulation (*yindi chomchit phitsawong*),
> In their first deflowering (*reakroem pradoem butsabong*).
> Having released their passion, they take a bath with great pleasure.

With this love scene represented by natural symbols such as a storm, thunder bolts, a sea-faring ship in the midst of storm, and rain, eventually this Javanese and Melayu conjunction would be disclosed through a poetical convention of sexual practice. This very moment of conjunction has also disclosed the context of the translation of these Javanese tales into the Thai literary landscape. We have seen how the Javanese language seems to be contained within Java, incapable of communicating beyond its frontier. However, Melayu, the language that could not be contained within the Javanese cultural sphere and that is also beyond its comprehension, is seen to play a significant role in the context of translating these Javanese tales into other languages. Remarkably, the status of the Melayu language itself is registered in the most popular Javanese Panji tale, namely

Panji Jayakusuma, in which the Melayu emerges during a fight among the nursemaids who are among the low-class background personalities in the tale.[98]

With this complicated moment of conjunction, the Thai versions unintentionally suggest the communicative limits of the Javanese language beyond its cultural sphere, by exposing the dominant role of the Javanese male in sexual relations with the Melayu female character, and the culturally superior attitude that instead of learning Melayu, Sangkhamarata is going to teach Javanese to his Melayu partner. To the contrary, however, the peripheral existence of Melayu on the fringe of Javanese culture itself helps in shaping the cultural sphere of the Javanese. Externally, Melayu was in charge as the communicative device for the translating practice in rendering these Javanese tales into Thai poetry, henceforth suggesting its effectiveness in communication beyond its culture.

Having encountered the Thai Panji texts, the queries regarding its authors and translations are unavoidable and become a tempting subject that casts light on the Panji romances as a crosshatch of Southeast Asian cultures. It is fruitless, however, to search for the original Panji texts on which the Thai versions are derived. The fall of Ayutthaya resulted in the loss of old manuscripts, among which could have been the originals. More significantly, the great popularity of the texts had induced its reproduction in many forms, including the literary texts of the dance drama itself. Instead of dwelling on

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[98] Poerabatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan*, 165-6. The manuscript said, "Seorang emban Surengrana dan seorang emban puteri Purwangga, menjingsingkan kainnja dan saling menentang dalam bahasa Melayu (tjara lumajwa): "Mari beri sama satu, elu emban guwa emban. Mana rupanja si andjing, embannja putri Purwangga, mari sama satu gotjo(a)n, tidak takut sama elu, sama anak Semarang." Tapi mereka dipisahkan oleh emban puteri Tjangtjangan, jang berkata: "Djangan gusur entjik entjong, tidak baik orang gusur, sama-sama sudara, saja ini sudah teluk, sama emban mipro besar."

origins, our query on authorship brought up related issues concerning the very concept of authorship from Thai perspectives, leading to our exploration of prosodic conventions.

Prince Damrong's intervention on the mediating role of the Melayu language brought forth another dimension of the medium of its translation. Melayu was not only used within the Thai court's foreign office in communicating with other Southeast Asian world, especially the Melayu world and the Western colonies both in the Dutch East Indies and British South India, but it was also a *lingua franca* in the Ayutthaya trading ports in the eighteenth century.

In order to cast light on Melayu as a *lingua franca*, it was necessary to explore the ethnoscape of Ayutthaya. The regular appearance of Melayu terms in the Thai Panji texts, intended to generate a Javanese atmosphere, may have philosophical implications concerning the divine connection between word and thing, language and truth. But instead of following upon the divine presumption, we have argued that the multivocality in Thai poetic vocabularies could be better comprehended if we looked into the Ayutthaya ethnoscape and its social components. Assuming the role of Melayu as a medium, then, we have meditated upon a certain mode of the tale's translation. The absence of origin and its evident growth in translation not only suggests a local practice in translation, but plausibly an accommodation or negotiation with the knowledge adopted from the outside world.

Finally, in order to feature Melayu as a *lingua franca* in Southeast Asia, a poetics of trancultural communication drawn from an episode from the Panji text was illustrated. While the cross-cultural encounter, enveloped within a sexual practice, is unique in the history of Thai traditional literature, what is even more remarkable is that the Melaka

entrepot was designated as its location. The encounter with a foreign tongue in this episode generates much excitement but also, at the same time, a certain amount of anxiety about communicative failure. This poetics evokes a historical moment of the entrepôt world of which Ayutthaya was definitely a part.

CHAPTER 4

A Representation of Java and a Failure of Recognition

Intended to be represented as a foreign romance, *Inao* was framed through a number of cultural traits imagined to simulate an experience of the Javanese world. Apart from "Javanese" and Melayu lexical elements discussed in the previous chapter, Hindu-Buddhist influences were drawn up to portray the cultural practice of Javanese life. This chapter begins with a discussion of Hindu-Buddhist Javanese identities and their Islamic peripheral elements as found in Thai versions of the text. In discussing the entry of Melayu as a cultural frontier, another Thai Panji text will be introduced as another source of memory of Hindu-Buddhist Java. Deeply related to the representation of Javanese identities I will, finally, discuss a peculiar logic of apparent identities and recognitions that govern the narrative structure of the Panji tales, such as the name-changing and over-naming that led to a questioning of the authenticity of identities and a subsequent failure of recognition.

Representation of Hindu-Buddhist Java and Peripheral Islam

In contrast to the conventional opinion that *Inao* is "a dance drama in verse based on a Javanese chronicle adapted to a Thai setting," thus "reflect[ing] Thai customs and culture of the early Rattanakosin [Bangkok] period,"[1] I view it as a story that intends to represent a foreign cultural-topological space for a Thai audience. The story's foreignness

[1] Kullasap Gesmankit, "Inao: A Dance Drama by King Rama II," translated by Pongsri Lekawatana, in *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures, Volumes IIIa: Thai Literary Works of the Thonburi and Rattanakosin Periods* (Bangkok: ASEAN, 2002), 211.

is suggested by its plot, imagined political structure, and topological sites that are explicitly non-Thai. For instance, the five queens, the prince's and the princess's four escorts, and the four main ministers, i.e., Pateh, Tammangong, Damang, and Yasa, are exclusive to these four kingdoms. Moreover, throughout both versions of *Inao*, Javanese and Melayu linguistic currencies are mobilized with a clear semantic intention of generating foreign sounds that keep reminding the Thai readership of its foreign origin. Most of all, it is a representation of Hindu-Buddhist Java.

According to Stuart Robson, "As far as religious background is concerned, the Panji story is always set in a Hindu-Javanese context; there is no trace of Islamic influence."[2] Although he attempts to show a transformation when these Javanese tales were reproduced in Thai poetry, by pointing to the addition of Buddhist elements, the Hindu influence is still apparent in the Thai Panji versions, in which Hindu-Buddhist moral agents keep appearing on the scene, i.e., Rusi (ascetic), Ae-nang (female hermit), Phram (Brahman), Chi (literally Buddhist nun, here most likely a female hermit), Biku (Bikkhu or Buddhist Monk), Bikuphramana (Bikkhu and Brahman). Meanwhile, the "baela" or *sati* ceremony in which the widow is forcibly burnt alive, uncommon to Thai cultural practice, is also registered as a traditional Javanese ceremony;[3] besides, cremation is also the general practice used to dispose of the bodies of the dead. Likewise, the Daha court's ritual offering at the sacred site on Mount Wilis summarized below is also meticulously rendered with the clear intention of portraying the Hindu Javanese

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[2] Robson, *Wangbang Wideya*, 11.

[3] In a report of his visit to Bali in 1846, Chin Kak also gives an account of the *sati* ceremony still practiced by the Balinese at that time, see "Kham hai kan chin kak rueang mueang bali" [A Testimony of Chin Kak about Bali], *PCPSWD*, vol.7 (1917), 39-41; see also Elizabeth Graves and Charnvit Kasetsiri, "A Nineteenth-Century Siamese Account of Bali, with Introduction and Notes," *Indonesia*, no.7 (April 1969).

court's ceremonial practices still performed by central Javanese courts, possibly until the time in which the texts were composed.

In the Daha episode, after the war is concluded all the family members of the Daha court move to Mount Wilis for an annual ceremony. The deity's hall is fully adorned with flags and banners, the musical instruments are transported, and ritual offerings (*khrueang bat phli kam* or *khrueang sangwoei phlikam*) are fully prepared, including thousands of different animals (*INRII* 358). When everything is ready; the king of Daha begins his sacred ritual.

> He lights a fire on the candles and incense sticks,
> Paying homage to the Lord of Creation (*thewarat rangsan)*,
> Presenting him the ritual offerings,
> The beautiful silver and golden mountains (*phukhao ngoen suwan*),
> Including the goats, sheep, cows, gaurs, buffaloes;
> Everything is a thousand each,
> Fulfilling his preceding vow;
> The music is then asked to start….
>
> Then,
> Raden Montri (Inao), the dignitary,
> And other princes (*raden*) that come along with him,
> Mount their horses at once.
> The golden shield voluntary corps is skillful;
> The horse training division is highly energetic;
> Each paying homage to the king,
> And riding onwards.
>
> Some are dancing in spear posture on horseback,
> Riding proudly;
> Some dance with lances, as if engaging in victorious combat,
> Encircling, chasing, and stabbing the animals.
>
> Shouting and riding the horses,
> Slaughtering the cows, gaurs and buffaloes,
> Throwing their lances and piercing the animals.
> The terrified bold buffaloes thus attack;
> Some are greatly excited, run amok daringly,
> Leaping up, fighting, confusingly.

> Some are furious, giving a bloody fight, without fear,
> Keep colliding till they are eventually dead.
> (*INRII* 359-61)

When all the animals are killed, the meat is cooked and the royal party dines on the spot. Then dancing is performed by the royal families in paying homage to the deity, another part of the ritual.

This sacrifice scene is clearly intended to represent a Javanese culture foreign to early nineteenth century Thai experience. It evokes Javanese court ritual annually performed on the sacred sites of Mount Lawu and Mount Merapi by the central Javanese courts, both the Kraton Surakarta and Kraton Yogyakarta.[4] With all these references, the Thai Panji tales are thus represented as Javanese, especially through the regular exploitation of the foreign tongue.

Moreover, there seems to be a clear demarcation of both political and cultural spheres between Hindu-Buddhist Java and Islamic Melayu. In spite of its peripheral position, Melaka occupies a special space in this text and is treated with a certain recognition of its Islamic significance in the Melayu world. Having recognized such memory in the Melayu experience, the text employs Melaka in fashioning the "other" while inscribing a memory of Hindu-Buddhist Java. In another Thai version, namely *Dalang*, when Raden Misa Pramang Kuning sails for the Melayu kingdom, the text states clearly that "he" is going to another place beyond the territory of Java (*sut daen chawa*) (*DL* 863). Beyond that Hindu-Buddhist Javanese frontier lie different cultural practices;

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[4] For an account of the Yogyakarta court ritual performed at Mt.Lawu, see L. Adam, "The Royal Offerings on Mount Lawu," in *The Kraton: Selected Essays on Javanese Courts*, edited with an introduction by Stuart Robson, translated by Rosemary Robson-McKillop (Leiden: KITVL Press, 2003).

for example, in the Melayu territory the people speak the Melayu language and those who have died are to be buried (*DL* 862).

Although Melaka is posited as its political site, the Melayu presence is nevertheless spread throughout the story, such as for instance in descriptions of the Melayu prisoners, the Melayu style of *kris* fighting and the dance performances. The Melayu, I would argue, helps to culturally frame the Panji stories. It enables the delineation of Javanese entities, politically and culturally. As discussed in the previous chapter, even the Melayu language is beyond Javanese comprehension.

Together with the Melayu language as a register of cultural difference, we find Islam also represented as closely associated with the Melayu. Therefore, when Inao (now devoting himself to asceticism) tells Raden Unakan that he has sailed from Melaka, the latter bursts out laughing and remarks that the Melayu has turned into a Javanese, leaving behind his [Islamic/Melayu] "nation" for the Javanese religion (*melayu ko klai pen chawa/ la chat ma khang satsana ni*; literally, the Melayu has turned into a Javanese/ leaving behind his nation for this religion) (*INRII* 533). This "conversion" becomes the subject of much teasing, where Inao and his followers are referred to as those who have "la satsana," literally "[who] left [their] religion." This accusation would have touched the sensitivities of eighteenth century Thai readers for whom Buddhism was instituted as a core element of society, and conversion to another religion was regarded as being harmful to the kingdom itself. Conversion, thus, is represented in this text as a sign of moral bankruptcy. In order to halt such a charge, Prasanta replies that since they have become a follower of the same religion (*thueng la satsana dang wa nan/ ko khao rit dieo kan*) (*INRII* 572), it should not thereby be an object of laughter.

In spite of its close association with Melaka, Islam is not seemingly perceived as exclusive to a Melayu topological site. Aware of its development and doctrine, that being Muslim is related, for example, to certain practices such as not being able to eat pork (*phuak khaek plaek thai mai kin mu*) (*INRII* 943), the Inao tale does not represent the Islamic element as being contained within the Melayu sphere. Instead, Islam keeps appearing on the Javanese scene. Even in the kingdom of Kurepan, the "Surao" (mosque) is worth a mention. In another coastal Javanese principality which Inao's troops have plundered, the people are depicted as having fallen into a state of panic, "standing and hailing Al-Salaam to the Allah (*yuen salam a-la*)" (*INRII* 4 and 489).

Yet, despite its emergence in the Javanese landscape, the existence of Islam and its dissemination into Java is regarded as peripheral. The full existence of Islam in Java was, thus, repressed in Javanese tales translated into Thai, albeit it was transmitted and reproduced at an historical moment when Islam had already become a crucial component of Java in the eighteenth century.[5] In other words, Islam is discursively deferred from the Javanese narratives structurally set within the Hindu-Buddhist cosmologies; henceforth, as an effect of its presence/absence, Java is differed and deferred from Islam epistemologically.[6] Not only is the religious practice entirely different from Islam but also, through this repressive technique, knowledge about Islam in Java is not even taken as a crucial component of the Javanese logo. Islam is yet to come, epistemologically forever deferred, as a source of categories of meanings for Thai society.

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[5] For an overview of the Islamic emergence in Java, see Theodore G. Th. Pigeaud and H. J. De Graaf, *Islamic States in Java, 1500-1700: A Summary, Bibliography and Index* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976).

[6] For a Derridean gesture on différance, see Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 89-110.

Rather than simply invoking the political implications of the reunification during the Majapahit period of the earlier-partitioned Java,[7] the sexual reunion of Kuripan and Daha that is structurally set within the Thai versions could be read instead as an attempt to induce the emplotment of a memory of Java within a Hindu-Buddhist historical past. Yet, since the narrative evidences a few signposts of Islam's existence, it is possible that this Hindu-Buddhist Java was intentionally encoded at the moment when Islam was making its influence. Having been captured in its pre-Islamic culture, Java is thus rearticulated through a journey of conquest that eventually brings all the Java lands, including the emergent Islamic elements, under a renewed structure of Hindu-Buddhist hegemony.

In another Thai Panji text, the *Dalang*, mentioned earlier, we find an even more intense memory of Hindu-Buddist Java. The text draws in more "Javanese" terms; Javanese topological sites are retained; and the narrative seemingly attempts to follow the "original" tale its author(s) had heard or overheard. In order to understand how this less-popular Thai Panji version could function as another source of memory, for Thai society, of Hindu-Buddhist Java, it would suffice for now to present a summary of this text.

Dalang or the Puppeteer, another Thai Panji Version

Following the introductory phase of laying out a Javanese genealogy, the text begins with Inao's first tragic love. When he is fifteen years old, Inao goes hunting in the forest and fortuitously meets with Ken Butsaba Sari, the daughter of a widowed farmer woman. Stunned by her graceful beauty, he takes her as his wife. Meanwhile, his father

[7] Robson, "Panji and Inao," 40.

also thinks that it is time for him to marry his fiancée Butsaba Kaloh, the princess of Daha, and take his place as king of Kurepan. However, Inao is totally infatuated with Ken Butsaba Sari and does not want to marry the Daha princess. His father thus deceives him by telling him that he suddenly desires to dine on venison and asks the prince to hunt a deer for him. While Inao is out deer hunting, the king sends his Tammangong to assassinate the unfortunate beauty. Learning of her death, Inao faints, then goes mad with distress and resolves not to return to the palace. Disguising himself as Panji, the "panjuret" (penjuri) or a forest bandit, he changes his name to Misa Kunung Panyi Mohtilara and starts his adventures (*DL* 10-98).

Structurally, the early phase of the *Dalang* text is similar to a Melayu version, namely *Hikayat Panji Kuda Semirang*. According to Robson, "the basic structure of the story includes a kind of prelude describing the prince's first love-affair with a girl of humble origin – a girl who had to be put to death to prevent the prince's making the wrong marriage."[8] Meanwhile, Poerbatjaraka also informs us that this Melayu version was probably translated from Javanese since it contains many Javanese lexical elements.[9] Nevertheless, I do not intend here to undertake a comparative exercise.

During Inao's wanderings, he chances upon the king of Pancharakan and his court who are making a trip through the forest. Upon laying his eye on the beautiful Raden

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[8] See Robson, *Wangbang Widaya*, 13; see also Poerbatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan*, 3-43 and his commentary in 379-82; Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 172-5.

[9] "Tjerita ini diterdjemahkan dari bahasa Djawa. Dan berbeda dengan tjerita-tjerita Pandji Melakju lainnja jang saja kenal, jang dikatakan diterdjemahkan dari bahasa Djawa, naskah ini menimbulkan kesan jang kuat pada saja, bahwa ia memang langsung disalih dari bahasa Djawa. Sebab dalamnja terdapat banjak sekali kata-kata Djawa, bahkan bagian-bagian kalimat... Bila ditimbang dengan teliti, sebenarnja kurang tepat pula djika dikatakan kata-kata dan bagian kalimat Djawa." See Poerbatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan*, xviii.

Butsaba Sari, the princess of Pancharakan, Inao abducts her. With the intervention of Sang Palinge Ruesi (Sang Paling Ruci), the king of Pancharakan acknowledges Inao's divine origin, and finally accepts Inao as his son in law. On his return to the kingdom of Pancharakan, Inao calls on the king of Satcha-unu and his son, Raden Surakanta - the former fiancée of Butsaba Sari - to submit. When they refuse, Inao kills them both and makes the two kingdoms his vassals. Hearing of the situation, the king of Pakmangan - a friend of king Satcha-unu - sends his tribute and his daughter, Kattika Sari; likewise, the kingdom of Kralambangan and other petty principalities also acknowledge his suzerainty and send him their "Suwan Bunga" (Bunga Mas). In Pancharakan, Inao marries Butsaba Sari and Kattika Sari and becomes the "front palace" king (*upparat faina*) of Pancharakan (*DL* 98-158).

After learning that the king of Pancharakan has a powerful new son-in-law, the king of Mangada tricks Inao into visiting his kingdom and attempts to kill him during a trip to a magical island. Fortunately, Inao is saved by the deity, Patara Kala, while losing his way with his troops. Together with Prasanta, they manage to enter the widow kingdom of Nusanta where he is presented with the queen and becomes the governor of this kingdom (*DL* 158-192). From here on, the plot structurally expands. Apart from Inao's adventures as its main plot, other characters' journeys also spur several subplots. The narrative thus moves back and forth between the main plot and its subplots, sometime even generating a sense that all these events are simultaneously happening.

Meanwhile, having learned that Inao has been deceived, Raden Butsaba Sari, Raden Katti Sari and others flee from Mangada to Kurepan. Raden Jarang Kanangloh - Inao's half brother - is thus sent in search of Inao. On his way, the prince also disguises

himself as Kuda Wiraya. He succeeds in killing the king of Mangada and also conquers Lasam, a coastal kingdom that seems convenient to observe his brother's trace (*DL* 193-232). In the meantime, having been informed about the whereabouts of Inao, Raden Chintra Wanna - the prince of Singhasari - also asks his father to leave his kingdom to search for his uncle's son (*DL* 233-7).

On the part of Inao and Prasanta, unable to satisfy all the women's sexual desire in the widow kingdom, they eventually resolve to run away from the unbearable tasks. By accident, they run into Daha where Inao disguises himself as the puppet master, Ki Dalang from the kingdom of Pancharakan.[10] After he gives an artistic performance, Inao becomes famous over night. Since the Dalang and the *wayang* performance are registered as prominent Javanese features in this text, let us take a closer look at the following *wayang* scene:

> At dusk, when night came,
> They came to the *wayang* theater (*rong nang*).
> Misamangarat (Prasanta) lights a fire,
> Now blazing brightly;
> He orders the gong and the drum to start playing immediately,
> The music thus starts to pour out, noisily.
> All the people, men and women, in the city,
> Having heard the musical performance,
> Talk to each other, rush to have a look at once;
> Some have brought their children.
> Arrived, they have seen the screen (*cho nang*),
> Taking a seat, it becomes quite overcrowded.
> Having seen that the people have come,
> Misamangarat starts an overture (*boek rong*).
> He picks up and displays a puppet figure of the hunter (*rup phran*),[11]

[10] This motif is quite similar with the Panji tales in the Melayu world that the heroes (both Inu Kertapati and Candra Kirana) sometimes appear as the puppeteer master, see Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 161.

[11] In the Thai shadow puppet play, the performance will have to start with a hunter or a clown figure informing the audience about the story that will be shown that night,

> Intimidating, roaring, coughing, snorting, as is his manner,
> He then makes a joke, pretending to chant (*phak*) a story, regurgitation indeed,
> Generating a lot of fun among the people.
> Then,
> Panyi (Inao), the gorgeous, the beloved,
> Seeing the people crowded around,
> Picks up the puppet figures, starts the performance at once.
> He creates a story, intending to capture/intoxicate the people's mind,
> Intending to hold the people in their seats (*wang mi hai phu khon pai chak thi*),
> Becoming obsessed (*cha hai long*) with his performance,
> Experiencing a sheer ecstasy in his euphonious voice (*sin sompradi duai kangwan*).
> Chanting a story of a prince,
> Having taken a visit to a royal garden (*sataman*),
> He has met a maiden there,
> A great beauty, striking throughout her whole body.
> Being an object of sexual allure (*pen thi yua yuan chuan sanit*),
> The prince is amazed,
> Having a desire (*phit sa wat*) for her.
> He lost his mind, became insane, unconscious.
> (*DL* 256-7)

When it is seen how his graceful, celestial figure (*rup ko ngam dang thewa*) and his charming voice in performing the *wayang* capture the populace's mind (*surasiang thi wayang ko chap chai*) (*DL* 257), the Dalang is called upon to perform in the Daha palace.

> Saen pradit kit bot hai phairo
> Prachong phak sano pen nak na
> Surasiang chaeo chueai chap winya
> Tae banda khon fang hai nguai-ngong
>
> Clever in composing the euphonious verse,
> Meticulous in chanting with a melodious sound,
> His voice finely tuned, captures the audience's mind,
> The audience is totally in ecstasy.
> (*DL* 275)

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followed by the cow (signifies the god Vishnu) and the Brahmin ascetic. For Thai puppet shadow-play, see Paul Dowsey-Magog, "Khao Yam - A Southern Rice Salad, Heteroglossia and Carnival in Nang Talung: the Shadow Theatre of Southern Thailand" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 1997).

At the moment he sees his former fiancée's beauty, Inao loses his self-control, and even changes the verses of the story he is performing in order to praise the princess's beauty. Not able to tame his desire, the Dalang eventually sneaks into her bedchamber.

By that time, because of Inao's disappearance the king of Daha presents his daughter to be married with Ratu Pratahon. Learning of the marriage ceremony, Inao goes to practice his magical powers with an ascetic on the mountain and kills Ratu Pratahon. Upon his death, Raden Butsaba Kaloh is forced by a brother of the Pratahon king to perform the *sati* (*baela*) ceremony. However, the deity saves her life and transforms her into a man, gives her a *kris* inscribed with her new name, Misa Pramang Kuning, and casts a spell that when both Butsaba Kaloh and Inao have fully learnt of each other's identity, she will return to a female appearance. In order to take her revenge, Butsaba Kaloh kills the brother of Ratu Pratahon and becomes ruler of that kingdom (*DL* 237- 416).

During the *sati* ceremony, Inao faints and totally loses his mind, thinking that she is already dead. Together with his brothers whom he just encountered - Raden Charang Kanangloh and Raden Chintra Wanna, Inao takes refuge on a mountain and devotes himself to austere asceticism in order to calm his mind (*DL* 416-31). However, Inao is lured by a mythical hawk to the kingdom of Pattaram and marries Raden Chintara, the Pattaram princess (*DL* 451-61). When she is five months pregnant, Inao runs away from Pattaram in search of his brothers and his beloved. By chance, he comes upon the kingdom of Manya and again disguises himself as a masterful puppeteer, namely Alang Ratsami. His *wayang* becomes famous overnight and is invited to perform in the palace where his voice is greatly admired by the Manya court. After having performed *wayang*

for fifteen nights, the text suddenly becomes preoccupied with an internal conflict within the court that is seemingly based on the legend of Ken Arok when he was assassinated by a son of the former local ruler, Tumapel, whom he had killed before appointing himself as the Singasari king (*DL* 562- 76).[12]

Presenting his *wayang* performance within a crosshatch of court intrigue and regicide, the Dalang keeps performing and asking for protection from the deity.

> On the part of his Majesty the king of Manya,
> When his *karma* fortune comes,
> He takes a seat on his couch,
> Lies down, listening, and falls asleep.
> All the court officials (*seni*) are also leaning on each other,
> Some are drowsy, dozing off unconsciously.
> The two princes (*raden*) come now to the *wayang*,
> Waiting to capture the Dalang, Alang Ratsami.
> The prisoners seize their chance,
> Creeping slowly to the throne,
> Seeing the king sleeping on his couch,
> They move forward, intent to kill, stabbing him repeatedly.
> The *ratu* is now fully awake,
> Yelling loudly at the top of his voice.
> The prisoners jump out from the royal pavilion.
> Hearing his Majesty's voice,
> All the court officials are awake, in a state of sheer panic.
> Both princes feel as if they are about to die,
> Running fast, at once,
> Giving an order, capturing the murderers who try to escape.
> Having seen their father is dead,
> Both princes are full of fright,
> Frantically calling for all their men,
> Beating their breasts, crying,
> Riding their horses, all in a great confusion.
> The royal consorts all faint.
> The deity casts his magic, vanishing from the people's eyes,
> Creating a miraculous wind,

[12] For a study of this legend and its influences in Javanese memories, see Novita Dewi, "Power, Leadership and Morality: A Reading of Ken Arok's Images in Indonesian Literature and Popular Culture" (Ph.D. thesis, Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, 2005).

> Carrying gently the *wayang* theater,
> Ascending slowly into the sky.
> The prince Dalang keeps chanting in his euphonious voice,
> Floating above in the sky, in the east,
> Appearing (*prachak*) to the naked eyes of all people,
> The Manya people are astonished all.
> (*DL* 571-2)

After the king's assassination, the princes start fighting with each other until all are eventually dead. Having seen the Dalang still miraculously performing his *wayang* in the sky, the Manya court officials recognize his power and propose that he should marry the Manya princess and become ruler of the kingdom (*DL* 572-85).

Unlike the *wayang* scene in *Inao* that was intended to be a device to recover the character's memory (see below), the *wayang* in the *Dalang* text is not only registered as a crucial Javanese cultural feature but interwoven with a legend from Javanese memories, i.e., Ken Arok and his dynasty. A narrative such as *Dalang* is not, thereby, simply a romantic text but, associated with a legend, it is instead evoking a certain memory of the mythic genealogy of the Javanese ancient kingdoms. With this gesture, the text is doubly charged with its Javanese origin and historical memories of the God-king posited within the Hindu-Buddhist cosmologies.[13]

In a subplot, after the disappearance of Inao from his hermitage, Raden Charang Kanangloh and Raden Chintra Wanna have to go on another journey. During their wanderings, they conquer several kingdoms such as, for example, Marayakat Yuli, Suramarayu. Eventually, they come to Kalang where they are welcomed and receive the

[13] For a discussion on Javanese ideologies of kingship, see Robert von Heine-Geldern, "Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia," in *Southeast Asia: The Politics of National Integration*, edited by John T. McAlister, Jr. (New York: Random House, 1973).

favor of the king without his knowledge of their true identities. Due to a celestial beauty of Charang Kanangloh's concubine, Raden Suranakan - the Kalang prince - falls deliriously in love and attempts to marry her. Having been refused by his father, Suranakan captures the two princes and his own father and puts them in incarceration. Fortunately, they are saved by Raden Misa Pramang Kuning, whereas Suranakan is buried alive (*DL* 461-550). Following this, Charang Kanangloh is abducted by an ogre and loses his way from Kalang. During his wanderings, he accidentally meets Raden Butsaba Sari and Raden Kattika Sari who have also run away from Kurepan and disguised themselves as male performers (*a-moh*). Eventually, the trio are reunited with Inao in the Manya kingdom (*DL* 585-662). Later on, his son born from the Pattaram princess also find his way to Manya (*DL* 688-706). During his reign, Inao subjugates several other kingdoms, in which the battle with the kingdom of Mongkon will be lengthily glorified (*DL* 663-80, 711-835, and 880-4).

By the time Charang Kanangloh disappears from Kalang, Misa Pramang Kuning and Chintra Wanna also leave that kingdom again in search of their brothers. They wander to Bali before attempting to try the sea route, during which they sail up to the Melayu kingdom of Morakatsuri, the "frontier of the Java territory" (*sut daen chawa*). Finally, Raden Misa Pramang Kuning performs a ceremony asking about Inao's whereabouts from the deity, and learns of his glory in the kingdom of Mongkon. "He" then sends a message to Manya, pretending that "his" army is going to have a battle with Kalang and asks for his troop's free passage. Proceeding through the Manya kingdom, Inao and Misa Pramang Kuning pretend that they do not know each other (*DL* 602-23, 680-88, 707-11 and 835-94).

In parallel with the *Inao* text, the adventures in this version also conclude at the Kalang kingdom. When everyone comes to Kalang, Inao disguises himself again as a "kathoei" (man who performs a feminine sexual identity/appearance) and changes his name one more time to Saranakadi, a war prisoner of his brother Charang Kanangloh. By concealing himself as a "kathoei," Saranakadi trespasses into the princess's compound and tries to court Misa Pramang Kuning, a female in male appearance. Learning of Inao's true identity, surprisingly with a "red mole" (*fai daeng*) right between his eyebrows (*DL* 961), Misa Pramang Kuning thus undergoes a metamorphosis back to her female appearance i.e., Butsaba Kaloh, and secretly leaves to take her vows as a female hermit. Nevertheless, Inao follows and coaxes the hermit (*ae-nang*) Butsaba Kaloh to leave her ascetic state. Finally, they send messages to three other kingdoms, informing them of the reunion, and asking them to come for their wedding ceremony (*DL* 895-1006).

We earlier examined the possibility that *Inao* is adapted to some elements of Thai Buddhist culture and that its description of a town environment is possibly drawn from the eighteenth century Bangkok scene. Such a possibility is harder to imagine when reading *Dalang*. Its emplotment is rather complicated, containing several subplots in which a character takes his own journey and keeps changing his or her name repeatedly. Intended to surpass *Inao* in the recitation or singing that accompanies a dance performance, the text is emphasized as more foreign: the narrative is heavy with "Javanese" sounds and descriptions of clothing attires, and the *wayang* theater performance is fully maneuvered to represent the Javanese world. Oddly enough, however, in attempting to inscribe a few "authentic" Javanese cultural traits, identity is

represented in the text as always in slippage. Names are constantly changing; authenticity is suspect; recognition generally fails.

Camouflage, Shifting Identity, and Recognition

Intent to encode within itself a certain kind of "Javanese" memory, the possibility of the Panji narration is conditioned upon a logic of disguise, name change, gender change, shifting identities, and (mis)recognition. In order to disguise their real identities, the main figures of these "Javanese" Panji tales go undercover, disguising themselves by changing their names regularly. Identity is, thus, subjected to a choice of preference and could shift repeatedly with ease according to circumstances, through a technique of name changing and forgery, regardless of one's appearance. Recognition also works here from a peculiar logic since identity does not originate from the mutual memory of the interlocutors, but is solely "evoked" from the speech of each individual person and is actually self-referential. Within this logic, identity is worked out through a series of changes. Though it seems peculiar from a modern readership's point of view, these figures supposedly cannot recognize each other because they have changed their names, even though their appearances are familiar to each other.

This narrative logic is not exclusive to the Thai versions related earlier, but is a common feature of the Panji stories. For instance, in one of the Javanese Panji texts, when Panji comes to the Daha court, "The king of Daha was dumbfounded, imagining it to be Raden Makaradwaja, as his appearance was so like that of his elder brother, the king of Kuripan."[14] In the most popular Panji version in Java, *Panji Jayakusuma*, all the

[14] Robson, *Wangbang Wideya*, 79.

main figures also change their names; a few even change names more than once. For instance, when their ship is wrecked during a trip to pay a visit to his grandmother at Keling, in which all princes and princesses are separated from each other, Raden Putra (alias Kudarawisrangga or Panji Asmarabangun), the prince of Janggala or Koripan changes his name to Panji Jayakusuma, and disguises himself as a Dayak. His wife, Dewi Sekartaji alias Candrakirana, is washed away to Bali, and by the magical power of the god Narada, she is transformed into a young, extremely handsome man, Jayalengkara. "He" is adopted by the Balinese king and later becomes a king himself, called Bajosengara alias Prabu Jayalengkara. Meanwhile, Dewi Onengan, youngest sister of Raden Putra, is washed away to a certain cave, and transformed by the god Bayu into a young man, extremely handsome and powerful (*yang sangat tampan dan sakti*). "He" is renamed Kuda Jayaasmara and becomes a troop commander (*hulubalang pasukan*) of the Balinese king, Prabu Jayalengkara, who is in fact "his" sister in law.

Hearing of the shipwreck, the Janggala king sends other princes, Brajanata and Lempungraras, to search for them. Also befallen by a disaster, both princes are separated. Brajanata takes ascetic vows (*petapa*) on Mount Wilis and disguises himself as Wasi Curiganata, while Lempungraras who has been washed ashore at Patani, changes his name to Astramiruda. Furthermore, Gunungsari, princess Candrakirana's brother, sneaks out quietly from his kingdom, Daha, in search for his sister, and also changes his name to Astrawijaya.[15]

An unmistakable and significant feature of the Panji tales is, therefore, its playfulness, evidenced through such practices as overnaming, recognition, and the

[15] Siti Baroroh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara*, 28-9.

generation of anxiety that one might become the other. In a way, its complex plot is constituted from a fluidity of proper names and identities.[16] Vickers has touched upon this "concealment of true identities" and comments: "Somewhat surprisingly to a Western audience, these disguises involve the characters changing only their names, not their appearance. In the text, naming is the basis of identity."[17] In order to derive meaning from these tales, I would argue, one has to pay serious attention to proper names and changes to them.

It is well known that proper names were significant in Java and elsewhere in Southeast Asia as well. In an ethnographic note taken from central Java in the 1980s, Siegel reports that "it happens frequently in Java that names have a meaning."[18] A few decades earlier, Clifford Geertz also informed us from his fieldwork in East Java that "there are three types of names one uses, depending on what group one is in: village names, noble or *prijaji* names, and *santri* names."[19] As for the Melayu world, according to Anthony=Milner, a man's name (*nama*) "is his title, his rank, and his reputation. It indicates his position in life." In the most popular Melayu tale, *Hiyakat Hang Tuah*, we are told that names are not only important in this life, but "those who wish to enter heaven...must die with a good name (*nama yang baik*)." As a "ceremonial ruler,…no achievement of the Raja's can have been more significant to his subjects than the careful

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[16] For the relationship between recognition and identity, I have drawn considerably from Siegel's *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[17] Vickers, *Journeys of Desire*, 232.
[18] James T. Siegel, *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 303.
[19] Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 47-8.

stewardship of their *nama*." Within this light, the Melayu Raja's legitimacy comes largely from bestowing proper names on his subjects.[20]

In Thai society itself, before King Vajiravudh's reign (r.1910-1925), a Thai had only a proper name, without a family name.[21] If he or she joined the government service, he or she would then be granted an official rank and title, which would be changed in accordance with the Code of Civilian Offices and Titles, mentioned in the last chapter. This title could become the person's "name" accompanying his or her original proper name, in order to lessen the confusion with the persons who may have held that position before him or her. For instance, Phra Sunthonwohan (Phu), or simply Sunthon Phu, was a brilliant Thai poet during the nineteenth century. Phra was his official rank, Sunthonwohan was his title in the Scribes department, and Phu his original name.[22] The proper name, thus, remained the original source of reference for a person's identity. Generally, a person could choose any name, except for words associated with the monarchy. It was only during the ultranationalist government of Phibun in the 1940s that proper names were politicized and gendered.[23] A person's name could also change,

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[20] Anthony Milner, *Kerajaan: Malay Political Culture on the Eve of Colonial Rule* (Tucson, Arizona: Published for the Association for Asian Studies by the University of Arizona Press, 1982), 98-111, cited from 104 and 101.

[21] See Walter Vella, *Chaiyo!: King Vajiravudh and the Development of Thai Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1978), 128-36; Thanet Wongyannava, "Policing the Imagined Family in Thailand: From Family Name to Emotional Love" (paper presented at International Symposium on "Imagining Communities: Ethnographic Approach in South East Asia," at National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan, November 17-18, 2003).

[22] A similar practice that name is changed according to his ranking title was also common in the Melayu world; for instance, see Milner, *Kerajaan*, chapter 5.

[23] For a discussion of the country's and personal name-change during the Phibun period, see Anthony Diller, "What Makes Central Thai a National Language?" in *National Idenity and its Defenders: Thailand, 1939-1989*, edited by Craig J. Reynolds (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1991), 105-8.

moreover, when a Buddhist man was ordained as a monk. He would receive a new Pali name such as, for instance, Bhumipalo Bhikku, the present king's Pali name during his monkhood.[24]

However, the meaning of proper names in Java is rather unique. Contrary to Siegel's observation that "it happens somewhat less frequently that Javanese change their names" and "name change usually occurs after some misfortune,"[25] Geertz was earlier told by his informant in East Java that "Javanese change their names rather readily – after a severe illness, at marriage, after returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, on getting a new job, on the birth of their child."[26] A change of name is usually accompanied by a *slametan* or *ruwatan*. A Javanese who changes his/her name generally explains the reason for the change as being due to the "burden of the name," because it was too heavy for him/her and could invite many problems or sufferings to his/her life such as, for instance, sickness. If such ill-fortune occurred, the Javanese would say "*Wah... deweke kabotan mikul jenenge dewe*" (Indonesian: "*Wah... dia berat memikul namanya sendiri*"; "Oh... the name is too heavy for him/her").[27]

It is also possible that name change was not a recent cultural practice in Java for it is treated with a special playfulness in the Panji tales. Brakinsky, from a literary perspective, identifies this motif as follows:

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[24] For an account of the Buddhist ordination in Thailand, see S.J. Tambiah, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-East Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 103-8.
[25] Siegel, *Solo in the New Order*, 303.
[26] Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, 47-8.
[27] Candra Utama, Personal Communication, 14 February 2006; see also Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese culture* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), 235-6, 351 and 356.

> The development of amorous relations between protagonists in *Hikayat Cekel Waneng Pati* and other Panji-romances, in which Raden Inu appears in the guise of a 'low' personage, follows quite a different model. Undisguised 'insistent pursuit' gives way to secret languor, confessions of love and appeals to the beloved, 'cherished in the heart,' and, most importantly, concealed emotions of the enamoured...[28]

In this respect, disguise is employed as a strategy in pursuing one's secret desires that is possible because one's true identity is concealed. However, since a name is changed for the benefit of disguise, it is not a name-change in a real sense. Each character thereby has multiple names. It is over-naming in a sense, and the name becomes a site of contest. I would suggest that disguise generates instead a certain effect of overnaming, i.e., the anxiety that identity could be counterfeited. Through this repeated name changing, how, at the end of the day, could these figures enforce the recognition of their identities, and how could one be certain that he or she is truly authentic and not an imitation? In other words, in the context of a tempting desire that is not restricted to the sexual domain but possibly includes the Javanese territorial domain as well, the assumption of authentic identity is risked. Instead of forging a new dimension of identity in order to live up to the multifold expectations, a technique of disguises, i.e., name change, generates instead great distress about the heightened possibility of identity slippage.

In *Panji Jayakusuma*, the name changing is extremely dynamic. Identity is thus deferred in favor of self-reference and inner feeling. When Astramiruda and Astrawijaya see their brother Jayakusuma, it is the sense of feeling (*rasa*) inside their hearts that is recruited as a literary device to register the recognition. Both princes thus go forward and

[28] Brakinsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 167.

introduce their real identities (*mereka mengaku, siapakah mereka sebenarnya*).[29] Meanwhile, it is during his duel with the Balinese commander that Panji Jayakusuma accidentally opens his rival's mask and finds that Jayaasmara is in fact his own youngest sister, Dewi Onengan. Still not wanting to disclose his real identity, the head of another Balinese soldier is cut off and represented as Jayaasmara's head, whereas the princess herself is now disguised again under a new identity - a Balinese princess captured by Panji Jayakusuma. On the part of Prabu Jayalengkara, having heard of his commander's death, the king is saddened and comes to pray at a temple pavilion (*sanggar*) at night. Having hidden himself in the temple and amazed by the similarity between the Balinese king and his wife, Panji Jayakusuma pretends to be god and converses (*mengeluarkan kata-kata seperti suara dewa*) with Prabu Jayalengkara. Having heard that her husband is still alive, Jayalengkara looks at the fake god and realizes that he is in fact her husband. Eventually, after the battle is over Jurudeh and Prasanta also stop their disguising (*menghentikan rupa samarannya*).[30]

Heavily emplotted with all these disguises, the name changing that becomes overnaming in a society in which name has a significant meaning unavoidably induces an anxiety about the possibility of inauthenticity and imitation/falseness (*palsu*). Ultimately, only feeling (*rasa*) can be recalled in order to identify the "authentic" behind the masks. It is, thus, generating a group of "false" persons, a phantasm of over-naming in a sense that it is created from its effect, i.e., anxiety of inauthenticity. And it is only by defeating

[29] Siti Baroroh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara*, 29-30; Poerabatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan*, 140.
[30] Siti Baroroh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara*, 32-4; see also a variation of this episode in other manuscript in Poerabatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan*, 156-63.

those "false" men that the protagonist can reclaim his authenticity. The intrigue is invented by Bangbang Suteja (Sutedja), the king of Nusabarong, who desires to take Candrakirana as his wife, which thereby poses a threat to Panji's claim over the Janggala throne as well. The imitation Panji (*Panji tiron* or *Panji palsu*) along with his brothers and sisters come to the Janggala kingdom and accuse Panji and his brothers and sisters who are now ruling the kingdom that they are not in fact the real ones (*bukan Panji yang benarnya*), but they are just pretenders (*yang mengaku-aku saja*). The counterfeit Panji Asmarabangun makes a request for princess Candrakirana to surrender to him, but his demand is refused by the princess. Only by fighting between the two Panji, the real and the false (*yang sungguh and yang tiruan*), can they settle the claim. Certainly, the "real" Panji would win over the false one (*Tentu saja perang itu berakhir dengan kemenangan mereka yang bukan tiruan*).[31]

It is not clear for a modern readership how this settlement should be authenticated (*tentu*). The logic clearly rests upon the idea that only a real and powerful (*sakti*) king could defend/enforce his authenticity. Nevertheless, this whole question of authenticity opens up possibilities for the authentic to be challenged by the counterfeit, since the only justification for the recognition of the authentic is the quality as well as, perhaps, the quantity of power.

The fluidity of identities seems to be a striking trait in the Panji tales, and it has indeed been accepted as a crucial element in Thai versions. This feature, however, generated a significant amount of trouble in the literary world of eighteenth century Siam where morality is personified in imaginary figures such as, for instance, Rama, Ravana,

[31] Siti Baroroh Baried et al, *Panji: Citra Pahlawan Nusantara,* 35; Poerabatjaraka, *Tjerita Pandji dalam Perbandingan,* 172-4.

or all the heroes from the Jataka, and one's identity seems to be fixed. Among the rare exceptions are Pibeksa, Ravana's brother who sides with Rama, and transcendent beings such as Lord Vishnu or Lord Indra, whose superfluous characters were associated with their divinities. We must remember that both Thai versions were composed within the context of a nascent money economy and the emerging exchange-value of authorship. It is highly likely, then, that constant name changing became a real concern for the authors or composers since it generated a certain fear of identity shift and the questioning of authenticity. A literary technique to authenticate the real identity of the main characters was, thus, invented.

Through the series of name changes in order to disguise a character's true identity, the reader is assumed to believe that each character cannot recognize another person, despite the fact that appearances have not changed. By this assumption, therefore, appearance becomes useless for restituting the authentic attributes of one's identity, and so memory has instead to be jogged through a reconstruction of events in the *wayang* puppet theatre. In order to recover princess Butsaba's memory, the puppet show about a story of their loves and lives is arranged in *Inao*. After preparing the *wayang* characters, Prasanta and his puppeteers (*nak leng len nang*)

> Set up the screen (*tang cho*)
> Intentionally, directed towards the priestess's window.
> Having carefully lit and directed a lamp
> [He] will cast a *wayang* story (*cha wayang thawai*) to soothe your heart.
> Having launched three rounds of applause, beating the gongs,
> Blaring out a great loud music,
> Having cast the Inao figure on the screen,
> Prasanta narrates/sings (*phak*) his story at once.
> (*INRII* 778)

Illustration 8: Prasanta's *wayang* performance, mural painting, Wat Somanat, Bangkok, picture by author, 14 October 2005

From here on, a different style of verse form is employed in rendering the *wayang* tale, i.e., 34 stanzas of the *kap* verse and 12 short series of *rai*. Remarkably, a change in verse form here produces a double-gesture within the text. On the one hand, it tends to

generate a different atmosphere of the *wayang* scene from the main text composed flawlessly in the *klon* verse form. On the other, it is possibly intended to signal a dancing performance featuring the puppet shadow play.

By then, Raden Montri (Inao)
Proceeds to
The foothill (*kunung*), not taking so long.
Taking a break at a rest house, in front of the shrine hall,
Together with his followers,
Playing until dusk.

(Conversation)

On her part, the queen Madewi, the lovely one,
Together with Raden Butsaba,
Both are gently elegant (*sam ang a-ong*),
Along with all the royal consorts,
Crowding around the Beauty,
Moving on their way [to the hill].

(Conversation)

Arriving at the rest house at the foothill,
They chase us away,
Dispersed confusingly.
Inao goes inside the shrine hall,
Hiding in the Buddha image,
Waiting to see the princess.

(Conversation)

The beautiful queen Madewi,
Pays her homage
Full of respect in her heart.
Having taught Butsaba, briefly,
How to make a prophecy with a candle light (*siang thian*),
Of which side she would marry into.
Inao answers the princess's query,
"She would belong to him,
Not with Ratu Choraka."
Then they chase the bats,
The candle light dies out,
All is in darkness.

(Conversation)

Inao walks to her at once,
Sitting beside her closely,
Touches her with great delight.
Once Praseran (Butsaba's escort) lit the light,
Butsaba turns her face away,
She tries to remove his hand, affectedly.
The prince does not let her leave,
Asking for a piece of her cloth in exchange,
Then comes back to his compound.

(Conversation)

The king of Daha,
Since having an excursion,
Has stayed for some nights.
One afternoon, as the sun is cooling down,
He gives the order,
To mobilize the troops,
Returning to the capital.

(Conversation)

When both kings share the same room,
On the first night, the kings (Kurepan and Daha)
Sleep together.
Both princesses (Butsaba and Wiyada)
Sleep in the golden chamber,
Next to them, both queens (Kurepan and Daha).
Sriyatra and Raden Montri
Sleep in the gem chamber,
At the outer part.
Inao has to coax his brother (Sriyatra),
To ask for her cloth (*sabai*).
Having got it,
He always takes it with him,
Adores it as the beauty herself,
Every day and night.

The story is cut! And the *wayang* performance is now sanctioned by the princess herself. Having seen and listened to Prasanta's narration, she feels sad and cries. Though

still under the spell and not able to remember everything fully, all seems true and quite congruent with the feeling in her heart. She thus asks him to quit. Nevertheless, Prasanta does not listen to the hermit princess, and keeps chanting the story:

Then came the fire in the capital,
Raden Montri
Disguises himself as Ratu Choraka.
Abducting princess Butsaba,
Carries her to the carriage,
Leaving in haste at night.

(Conversation)

Arriving at dawn,
He takes her,
To reside in the golden cave.
Achieving his wish,
Their pleasure is consummated.
Passion is released, ecstatically.

(Conversation)

Raden Montri, the glorious,
Thinks that he should return,
Clearing up the suspicion.
He does not want to leave, reluctantly,
But needs to go,
Feeling weak in taking such a trip.
He tries to muster his courage,
Mounts his horse,
Goes through the forest.

(Conversation)

On her part, the princess,
Raden Butsaba,
Keeps crying, becomes weak,
Misses the prince.
Both escort ladies try to soothe and calm her,
She does not believe them,
Becoming more sad instead,
Keeps crying miserably.

Both ladies thus said,
"You should not feel sad in your heart,
Let us go out,
Have a look at the flowers."

(Conversation)

Prasanta takes her,
To have a look in the garden,
In order to lessen her sadness.
He asks her to take a seat in the golden carriage,
Both the escort ladies,
Also seated at the back.

(Conversation)

Admiring the various fauna,
Picking up bunches of flowers,
There are various fascinating kinds.
Suddenly, there is a miraculous phenomenon.
The wind sends the golden carriage,
Flying away into the night.
(INRII 778-84)

Using certain devices, i.e., the *wayang* performance within the narrative of *Inao*, the fluidity of identity is thus arrested and authentic identity is able to be reconstructed. The hero and the heroine eventually resume their original identities. Likewise, the anxiety of overnaming and the slippage of recognition are finally resolved. However, identity is not exclusively associated with a narrative of one's own memory; most likely it is an effect of the mutual recognition of a certain memory shared by both characters. Recognition is possible, therefore, not through a reconstruction of memory *per se* but through a reconstruction of memory about certain attributes of appearance. Seemingly, it is for this reason that the texts would repeatedly describe the beauty of the characters' "Javanese" attire such as, for example, the shawl, the *kris*, and the headdress specially designed for Inao's dance performance (see illustration 9 and 10). In this world of an

imagined foreign landscape, even flora and fauna would appear in untranslated form and speak to the Thai readership in a foreign sound.

Illustration 9: Court Lady in Inao, mural painting, Wat Somanat, Bangkok, picture by author, 14 October 2005.

Illustration 10: Inao, the TV Series, Chanel 3, http://www.thaitv3.com/service/wallpaper-40.html

Instead of enforcing a memory of Hindu-Buddhist Java, a representation of "Javanese" appearance was thus emphasized and regularly flavored with the foreign sounds generally assumed to be Javanese. At the end, these tales are overflowing with

Javanese names and a certain anxiety about shifting identity is induced by the effect of overnaming. Moreover, since names are kept untranslated, a dim recognition of Java, possibly a side-effect of disguise and overnaming in which everyone becomes unclear, is all that these Panji tales could render into the Thai literary tradition. Finally, it was a recognition of the signs of Javanese appearance, not a memory of authentic Java, that led the Thai literary world to an obsession with Javanese appearance, appropriated through so-called “Javanese” lexical elements. The obsession with these Javanese signs is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

A Fetish of "Javanese" Appearance, a Subversive Form of Poetry, and a Poet of Empty Sign

As the Melayu lexicons and idioms, the Hindu-Buddhist cultural elements, the distinctive cultural features such as overnaming and fluid identities, were subsumed under a category named "Java," the "Javanese" sound and appearance became two referential signifiers recognized and consumed as a representation of the foreign romance. In this chapter, I will move on to discuss the effects of the translation of the Panji tales within the Thai cultural space.

Evidently, the obsession with the Panji tales and Javanese appearance, and the enormous excitement generated, led to Thai cultural reproduction and reflection in many forms. The exotic "Javanese" tales became something like a literary disease that infected a range of court poets from the late eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century - for example, Luang Sorawichit, Sunthon Phu, King Rama II, Princess Kamphutchat (a niece of King Rama I), Prince Wichaichan (the eldest son of King Pinklao and the Second King during the early King Chulalongkorn reign), and so on. While Luang Sorawichit was the famous author who composed *Inao* in a beautiful *chan* verse form, Sunthon Phu had apparently played a crucial role in the court poets committee reworking *Inao* during the King Rama II reign. The King himself was not only an excellent poet who actively presided over the committee, but also composed a famous classical song of Thai music related to the *Inao* stories, i.e., "Bulan Loi-luean" (A Flying Moon). For Princess Kamphutchat, she was famous for composing a chronicle of her

father's death in poetic form and her name is surprisingly registered in the National Archive as the author of a less known fragmented manuscript of *Inao*.[1] It is tempting to argue, therefore, that the early Bangkok elite became obsessed with the Javanese appearance associated with Panji tales.

Apart from literary reproduction and dance performance, *Inao* was also translated into mural painting that is found, for instance, in a whole chapel devoted to the *Inao* story in a Bangkok monastery that was built in the middle of the nineteenth century.[2] Nevertheless, the radical effect of the obsession was crystallized within the literary tradition. The main part of this chapter, therefore, will focus on two renowned literary works composed in the early nineteenth century that not only reflected the influence of the Panji tales, but also brought this cultural crosshatch into a new light, generating, for example, a subversive form of classical Thai poetry and a literary montage of the empty sounds intending to simulate the "Javanese" flavor discussed in earlier chapters.

The Obsession with the "Javanese" Appearance

The Panji tales were not only translated and contained within a Thai literary text, but were retranslated into a poetics of performing arts in the classical Thai dancing tradition as well. As recorded in a famous contemporary poem, the *Bunnowat kham chan* (a Discourse of Bunna, in Chan verse form), *Inao* was once beautifully performed by a court female dance troupe during a celebratory ceremony at the shrine of the Buddha's

[1] For Sunthon Phu, see also his "Nirat Inao" (A Mourning of Inao), reprinted in *Chiwit lae ngan khong sunthon phu*, 195-209; for Princess Khamphutchat's entry, see NA, Division of Old Manuscripts, "Nirat Inao" (A Mourning of Inao), composed by Phra-ongchao ying khamphutchat, vol.1, cabinet no.115, 5/2, bundles no.10, the Library having bought 2 June 1943;.

[2] See Chutima Chonhacha (ed.), *Mural Paintings of Thailand Series: Wat Somanat Wihan* (Bangkok: Mueang Boran, 1995).

Footprint in the middle of the eighteenth century.[3] Traditionally, dance performance in the Thai court, especially the *Khon*, was exclusive to male activities and seemingly associated with military training. Mostly, it featured the war episode drawn from the *Ramayana* and was intended to simulate a real war campaign for practicing the soldiers.[4] Female dance performance (*lakhon nai*) was a late Ayutthaya cultural invention; in Prince Damrong's words, "a female dance performance was just invented recently."[5] Its invention was possibly related to a Javanese connection. As mentioned earlier, during the reign of King Phetraja the Thai court had appealed to Batavia to send him some Javanese court's female dancers.[6] Students of Thai history, drawing from the *Sang thong* (The Golden Conch), another verse drama composed by King Rama II who was born in 1767, the very year of the fall of Ayutthaya, believe that both Thai Panji versions were well-known in dance form during the late Ayutthaya period.[7] In the text, after the prince has defeated Lord Indra in a Polo duel (*ti khli*), the king says that he is going to hold a festival to celebrate a grand victory.

> Proceeding to the throne, not yet seated,
> The king gives his order to the high officials,
> My son in law is victorious in playing the polo duel,
> I will elevate him to rule this kingdom tomorrow.
> You have to get things arranged promptly,
> Decorating things for the accession ceremony,
> Making it the most colorful procession that we have ever had.
> We are going to perform the *Inao* dance at least for nine days.
> You should go to consult with the *Lakhon* (dance) master,

[3] Maha Nak, *Bunnowat kham chan*, in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 334.
[4] See, for example, Maha Vajiravudh, "Notes on the Siamese Theatre," in *The Siamese Theatre: Collection of Reprints from Journals of Siam Society*, edited by Mattani Rutnin (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1975), 7.
[5] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, in his *Lakhon fon ram*, 309.
[6] Dhiravat, "Javanese horses for the court of Ayutthaya," 9-10.
[7] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 317; Nidhi, *Pakkai lae bairuea*, 16-8.

Who was renowned in dancing and was diligent.
The story of *Inao*, about Misa Unakan,
Competing with a performance of the *Dalang* tale, especially the mourning scene.[8]

Longing for their old world, the early Bangkok elite had attempted to reconstruct commensurably the Ayutthaya cultural achievement.[9] With the suppression of Nakon Si Thammarat's rebellion, they had unexpectedly discovered the Ayutthaya court dancers who had fled away during the Burmese sacking. A leading female dancer named Chan or Chan Usa (which literally means "Chan who had gained her reputation from dancing as Princess Usa," a heroine from another famous poem, *Tale of Prince Unnarut*), was thus appointed as master of a revived court dancing troupe that, among others, also performed the *Inao* story.[10] The Bangkok elite, obsessed with the Panji tales, apart from other literary texts and the dance performance also translated the *Inao* story into a form of a mural painting on the walls of their dwellings. Prince Damrong once related that he had seen a certain episode of *Inao* painted on the wall of the residence (*wang*) of princess Thepsudawadi, King Rama I's elder sister who was born during the late Ayutthaya period.[11]

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[8] King Rama II, *Bot lakhon nok* [Stories for the Dancing Drama] {first published in 1922} (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 2002), 179.
[9] See, for example, Klaus Wenk, *The Restoration of Thailand under Rama I, 1782-1809*, translated by G. Stahl, Monographs and Papers of the Association for Asian Studies 24 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968).
[10] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 330-2. Peculiarly, this fact is gone without a notice of Titima Suthiwan in her claim that "a fragment of the oldest version of *Inao* was found in Nakhorn Si Thammarat, while nothing has been found in Ayutthaya, which has long been claimed to be the place of its origin. More directly, it can be said that the story of *Dalang* and *Inao* might have been composed and played in Nakhorn Si Thammarat or nearby area.... and finally went to the palace." See Titima, "Malay Lexical Elements in Thai," 95.
[11] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 310.

Illustration 11: Daha Episode, painting on the Tipitaka cabinet, early Bangkok, Department of Fine Arts, picture from Buntuean Siworapot.

Even though early Bangkok culture was a reconstruction of Ayutthaya's achievements, the ruling house and the elite also cultivated an entrepôt life-style, influenced by a common folk culture and, not the least, the force of an emerging money economy.[12] Moreover, it is arguable that after a series of Burmese attacks were

[12] Nidhi, *Pakkai lae bairuea,* chapter 1.

successfully repelled, the Bangkok elite began to feel secure enough to rearticulate their views and, seemingly, they became bored with Ayutthaya's cultural heritage. During his reign, Rama II thus attempted to adapt to the changing times the old style of court dance that "looks so slow as to be annoying, because the text is not congruent with the style of performance" (*du chakcha chuan ramkhan phro bot mi dai taeng prung pai kap withi len lakhon duai kan*).[13] Some "old," highly regarded literary texts which were sung or recited in accompaniment with dance performance were thus revised, and among them was *Inao*. These literary texts were reworked, and rephrased, by a committee of court poets presided over by the king to make the recitation more euphonious and the dance more artistically pleasing.

Illustration 12: Dance Performance in Inao, mural painting at Wat Somanat, Bangkok, Mueang Boran's Collection

[13] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao*, 344.

According to Damrong, the new text was reworked by the dance master, namely Prince Phitakmontri, who upon reciting the verse/text would promptly translate it into a dance movement. That is, the literary/oral text was translated into the performative language of a dance performance, whose aim was to perfect the congruence between the verse and the dancing posture. Together with his men, i.e., Nai Thongyu and Nai Rung, the prince would introduce the dance posture in front of a mirror (*song ram tham bot thot phra net nai phra chai*) and they would help him to perfect it (*chuai kan kaekhai krabuan ram pai chon hen ngam chueng ao pen yutti*). As a result, they sometimes had to ask the king-poet and his committee to revise some phrasings in the text, in order to make the relation between the recitation and the dance as flawless as possible.[14]

As mentioned earlier, Thai classical poetry took pains to create euphonious sound, intending to produce a "musical effect." Signifiers from different linguistic systems familiar to Thai literati were thus substitutable with Thai terms in order to meet versifying constraints. It was, nevertheless, not the case with the emergence of the "Javanese" lexical elements exploited in the Panji tales. Instead, it appears that these signifiers were intentionally drawn up to flavor a foreign appearance. Once they became popular, these terms played a similar role as other foreign lexicons in Thai poetry. Gedney once noted that "Fifteen or twenty words of Malay origin are used frequently in all the Inao texts for 'moon,' 'flower,' etc., and *not elsewhere in Thai*," adding that they "serve simply as a reminder signal that this is the Inao story and not something else."[15] On the contrary, these words were frequently used and had gained currency outside of the

[14] Damrong, *Tamnan rueang lakhon inao,* 344-5.
[15] Gedney, *Thai and Indic Literary Studies,* 28. Emphasis added.

Panji texts ever since the Ayutthaya period.[16] For instance, Prince Thammathibet, the mid-eighteenth century poet of great repute who was contemporary with the translation and composition of the Panji tales in Thai verse forms, registered "Javanese" words like *uba*, *bunga* and *burong* in his poems.[17] In another well-known poem from the same period composed for dance performance, the *Botlakhon rueang nang manora* (Dancing Drama of the Story of Princess Manora), the Makassarese, the Muslim (*khaek*), the Javanese, and the Melayu terms for enemy (*musuh*) and misfortune (*celaka*) are referred to. In one episode, the princess's mother is trying to stop her to go out to bathe in a mythical forest because an astrologer predicts that she will have bad fortune. Mobilizing certain terms for foreign ethnic groups that the Ayutthaya audiences would have been certainly familiar with, her mother says:

> Being a female, my dear,
> You should not behave like a 'slutty'.
> Your body is just small like a little kermit,
> You are coaxing me to get a husband.
> Weaving, you could not even do it properly,
> He shall take a shuttle to beat your head.
> You are coaxing me to get a husband,
> My dear daughter, how long could that last?
> Would you like to have (*liang*) a Muslim husband (*phua khaek*)?
> Or, would you like to have a Thai husband?
> Or have as many as could satisfy your desire (*nam chai*)?
> Should I send you to the Makassarese (or/and) Mon (*ai mon makkasan*)?
> Should I send you to the Chinese at Pakmot,
> And let them cuddle you until you die?
> That Makassarese (or/and) Mon.
> Should I send you to those Japanese-shaped heads?
> Raising a child, oh people/ raising other people's child,
> This girl really has a giant heart, a vulgar mind.

[16] For a linguistic study of these loanwords, see Thitima Suthiwan, "Malay Lexical Elements in Thai," 65-7 and 77-108.
[17] Prince Thammathibet, *Kap he ruea* [Boat Chant] and *Phlengyao* [A Long Ballad], reprinted in *Wannakhadi samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 2-4 and 307.

The Japanese shaped head
Would indeed satisfy you, Princess Manora.

In order to defend herself from mother's reprimand, Princess Manora replies that she does not want any husband; instead her mother could take one if she wanted to. She thus makes her mother feel even more angry and invokes a Melayu curse, i.e. *celaka* (means misfortune or bad luck), to halt her from an unfortunate trip. She tells the princess that she is really a *celaka* person (*phuak ikhirai celaka*, literally a group of unfortunate persons). "You are a bitch indeed (*idok thong*, literally "woman of the golden flower")," her mother rebukes her. Princess Manora's reply to her mother is a memorable stanza in this scene. She says,

Oh, my dear mother,
You are not right to revile me.
All my elder and younger sisters are sluts;
Our whole clan is a clan of bitches.
We all are a clan of bitches.
All bitches, the whole family,
The same bitches indeed,
Including you, mother.

As the argument goes on, her mother throws in some other references to keep her daughter at bay. Structurally, the next reprimand should be stronger to hurt her feeling up to the point that it could delay her plan. This time, she compares her daughter to a poisonous hornet, an unclear enemy, and an unreliable, double-tongued (literally fork-tongued) Javanese:

Oh, this lady,
You really are a cheap woman, Princess Manora,

> Oh, my beloved daughter,
> Your heart is more cruel than a hornet's.
> You really are a daughter of the enemy (*musu*),
> A daughter of the double-tongued Javanese (*chawa lin laen*).[18]

In the Thai classical literary tradition, a glossary of these words was generally recognized as Javanese, not Melayu, and was included as part of the provision of more substitutable terms registered from various languages, firstly in the literary text aiming to produce Javanese appearance and later in a language and versification textbook. As far as I have been able to glean from manuscripts in the National Archives in Bangkok, a "Javanese" glossary was compiled for possibly the first time in the last few pages of a late eighteenth (or very early nineteenth) century literary manuscript. It states,

> These [Javanese] terms are for use in composing *khlong, chan, phengyao, rong lakhon* verse as the poet wishes. Only few of these terms, however, were inscribed, for those who have the wisdom to memorize in order to adorn their scholarship, in order to gain repute for their wisdom. (*sap lao ni pen phasa samrap yok ok taeng khlong, chan, phengyao, rong lakhon tamtae cha lueak chai khat wai sing la noi, hai phu mi satipanya utsa sangket cham wai pen khrueang pradap samrap prat athi chahai fungfueang rueang satipanya sueppai*).[19]

Another textbook, apparently aimed at creating a unified writing system and prepared through the efforts of the American missionary, D.B. Bradley, offers a glossary for use in

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[18] *Bot lakhon rueang nang manora* [Dancing Drama on the Story of Princess Manora], in *Wannakam samai ayutthaya*, vol.3, 456-7. The term "musu" remains problematic. In the published version that had been edited possibly by Prince Damrong and his assistant Prince Kawiphot Supricha, the word used is "mosu," which sounds like a term in the southern Thai dialect, meaning "your people." However, the manuscript I had a chance to consult with Khun Bunthuean Sriworaphot, uses "musu." Bunthuean thinks that it could possibly mean "Monsieur," similar to the usage in a Thai travelogue about a trip to the French court in the seventeenth century. Instead of a French reference, generally called "farang," I believe that it is the Melayu word meaning "enemy."

[19] NA, Division of Old Manuscripts, "Nirat Inao," vol.1, cabinet no.115, 5/2, bundle no.10, donated by Chaophraya Mukmontri (Uap) in 1929.

composing poetry. It contains Royal terminology, Khmer terms translated into Thai, Thai terms translated into Khmer, Javanese terms translated into Thai (*kham chawa plae pen kham thai*), and Thai terms translated into Javanese (*kham thai plae pen chawa*).[20] Down to the end of the nineteenth century, even in the earliest textbook of the Thai language written for a new educational system, i.e., the *Anantawiphak* (the Infinite Classification) by Phraya Sisunthon Wohan (Noi Archarayangkun), Thai lexical elements were classified according to ethno-geographical origin. These were divided into nine groups, namely Thai, Cambodian, Pali, "Haripunchai" (Northern Thai dialect), Sanskrit, Sinhalese, "Taleng" (Mon), "Pagan" (Burmese), and Javanese.

Charged with non-translated "Javanese" terms, Thai readers were thus presented with polyphonic texts; the poetic language was constantly interpolated with signifiers whose referents lay elsewhere, in another sign system. Reading the Thai Panji tales, therefore, seems fairly straightforward, but not quite, since there is a certain gap between the signs and their referents. As a result, Thai students in the twentieth century had to consult the glossary for meanings of "Javanese" terms found in the tales.[21] Song Thepasit, a literary critic and writer, wrote in 1926 that, together with a number of other early nineteenth century tales, *Inao* introduced the Thai readership/audience to a rather new, strange world. In the case of *Inao*, he said, the reader would experience the world of

[20] D.B. Bradley, *Nangsue prathom koka ckaek luk akson lae cindamani kap prathommala lae pathanukrom: Elementary Tables & Lessons, in the Siamese Language* [Book of Genesis for Thai Script, Cindamani, Prosodic Manual, and Glossaries], facsimile reprinted in 2001 (Bangkok: Rongphim pakkhlong bangkokyai, 1879), 73-93.
[21] For example, Wichian Ketprathum, *Lao rueang Inao* [On the *Inao* Tale] (Bangkok: Phatthanasueksa, 1993), 237.

kris dancing, the world of the deity Lord Asandaewa, and the world of "khaek chawa" (literally, Muslim Javanese or foreign Javanese).[22]

Evidently, this imaginary "Javanese" world contained not only the irresistibly desirable figure of its protagonist, but also a wild, shocking element that terrified the Thai authorities. This fearful element, which was quite well-known in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was encrypted in the figure of Raden Sriyatra Ningrat, the younger brother of the Daha princess Raden Butsaba, and his relationship with Inao. Taking Sriyatra to be his sister, Inao shares his bed with him, substituting him for the Daha princess.

> (He) brings him to the golden couch,
> Leaning himself at his side,
> Laughing, chatting, and cuddling (*kot kai koei*),
> The prince cuddles and substitutes him for princess Butsaba.
> Once the young prince has slept soundly,
> He cuddles and kisses his brother (*khanittha*, literally sister),
> Cuddling and caressing his body (*lom lao lup lai pai ma*),
> Taking him as princess Butsaba (*samkhan wa butsaba nari*)...
> He cuddles, caresses, and fondles him (*phra kot chup lup lai*),
> Until he himself has fallen asleep.
> (*INRII* 373)

The reference to Sriyatra invokes same-sex male eroticism, which definitely transgresses a social norm of sexual practice in traditional Thai society. It not only spurs a strong feeling of male sexual eroticism within a literary text, but it also makes evident, through Sriyata, the extent of same-sex fantasy practiced among the early Bangkok monkhood,

[22] Song Thepasit, "Rueang pralom lok" [Romantic Stories] {1926}, reprinted in *Khwam rak chiwit lae phonngan: Song Thephasit* [Love, Life and Works of Song Thephasit] by So. Plai-noi (Bangkok: Dokya, 1993), 144.

even though monks were strictly forbidden from sexual practice in any form.[23] In order to cope with the perceived moral bankruptcy of the Sangha, King Rama I issued another code in 1801, stating that some monks do not behave properly. Some drink spirits; some eat at night (forbidden, unless one is sick); some sell their robes or bowls for gambling; some change out of their robes to go roaming at night; some talk in a vulgar, coarse manner. Some even have taken beautiful boys as their companions, taking them wherever they go, cuddling and kissing them at night (*kot chup lap non khlao khlueng*, literally, "cuddling, kissing, sleeping, and fondling"). They call this young boy "luk sawat" (literally, a beloved or desirous child), "luk sut chai" (literally, a heart-taken child), "yanat" (literally, snuff, a kind of medical powder), or "sriyatra ningrat".[24] The latter is the proper name of one protagonist in the Thai Panji tale - the prince of Daha whom Inao substitutes for the princess beauty. Outside the literary text, his name is thus deeply associated with male sexual eroticism and was substitutable with homosexual desire. In a heterosexual society, his name transcended literary boundaries and became a sign of homosexual eroticism that could still carry its currency down to the middle of the nineteenth century. For instance, in one of his renowned poems composed in 1842, *Nirat phra phrathom* (a Travelogue to Phra Phrathom), Sunthon Phu, who had led a monastic life during most of King Rama III's reign (1824-51), still referred in his literary works to this perilous male erotic phantasm, "the beloved/desirous child Sriyatra" (*luk sawat sriyatra*).[25]

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[23] For the sexual practices of monks in the early Bangkok period, see a Sangha code (*kot phrasong*), no.8, *Kotmai tra samduang*, vol.3, 374-85.
[24] A Sangha code (*kotmai phrasing*), no.10, *Kotmai tra samduang*, vol.3, 387-91.
[25] Sunthon Phu, "Nirat phra prathom" (A Travelogue to Phra Phrathom), in *Chiwit lae phon-ngan khong sunthon phu*, 453.

A Subversive Form of the Court's Fetish: Raden Landai

Evidently, the exotic "Javanese" tales had been obsessed by a range of court poets ever since. Together with their lexical elements, these Javanese appearances began to fire the poets' imagination. A late Ayutthaya poem composed in *klon* verse form intended for dance performance, namely *Yukhan* (Prince Yukhan), attempted to embroider Javanese terms from the *Panji* stories and some Persian names drawn from the Dodecagon tales, resulting in the emplotment of a completely new story.[26] In another famous folk poem, *Khun chang khun phaen*, that was reworked or recomposed by the poets' committee at King Rama II's court, one of the main characters, Phlai Chumphon, disguises himself in the style of the Panji tales as a "Khaek Chawa" (literally Javanese Muslim or Javanese Foreigner). He dresses himself in the costume designated to the Panji characters: wearing a sarong, wrapping a shawl around his waist, having a *kris* on his belt, and wearing a turban. Most of all, he pretends that he cannot speak fluent Thai and attempts to produce a few "Javanese" sounds.[27] Meanwhile, Phra Mahamontri (Sap), another high-ranking official from the police department (*krom phra tamruat nai khla*) of the court of King Rama III, turned these highly praised, desirable tales into an object of laughter.[28]

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[26] *Botlakhonnok rueang yukhan* [Text for dancing performance, the story of Prince Yukhan], first published in 1877, reprinted with editorial work from old manuscripts by Thidapen Khemsawang (Bangkok: Krom Sinlapakorn, 2005). For the Persian treatise on political wisdom, the Dodecagon Tales, translated in 1753 by Khun Kalayabodi, see *Nithan iran ratchatham (rue thi riak kan wa nithan sipsong liam) chabap khwam khrang krung si ayutthaya* [Tales of the Iranian Royal Pieties (or the Dodecagon Tales), the Ayutthaya Version]; see also "Nithan iran ratchatham" [the Iranian royal wisdom], in *Prachum pakoranam*, vol.1, 1-71.

[27] *Sepha rueang khun chang khun phaen* [A *Sepha* Story of Khun Chang and Khun Phaen] {first published in 5 volumes in 1917-8}, 13th edition (Bangkok: Bannakhan, 2001), 1016-20. For an on-going translation project of this poem, by Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, see http://pioneer.netserv.chula.ac.th/~ppasuk/kckp/index.htm.

[28] Phra Mahamontri, *Bot lakhon rueang raden landai* [Raden Landai, a Verse Drama], first published in 1920 (Bangkok: Bannakit, 1998). Here after, cited as *Raden landai*.

In his most famous verse drama, *Bot lakhon rueang raden landai* (Raden Landai, a Verse Drama), obviously intended as a parody, Phra Mahamontri did not just simply mimic the Panji tales, but altogether subverted the court's literary tradition. Structurally, the Thai language could be roughly divided into three levels corresponding to its usage in different social contexts: First, the court language called "racha sap" (literally, royal terminology) consisting of a series of words strictly reserved for use with the royal family; second, the polite language used mostly among the elite and Buddhist monks, and thirdly, the coarse language used by the populace. Among the earliest laws of the Ayutthaya kingdom (found in 1351) issued in 1352, is Section 1 of "phra ai-yakan atya luang" (literally, Penal Code Regarding the Monarchy), which states clearly that:

> Anyone who is avaricious, ambitious, and frequently behaves not in accordance with one's status (*sak*; pali, sakti); behaves in a way that it is beyond what one's ranking status would allow; and cannot acknowledge the king's habit (*phra ratchaniyom*); and uses unsuitable words interpolated with the royal terminology (*racha sap*) in one's speech; and wears royal ornaments not approved for one's personal regalia; she/he is too presumptuous (*thanong ong-at*), and should be punished in eight types of penalty.[29]

Generally, in Thai literary tradition the court language was exclusive to the monarchy and royal figures. Phra Mahamontri's technique unhinged this structural relationship between language levels and social status. He reversed their norms of usage, inserting a certain gap between signs and referents. Composed in the manner of the literary montage, "Javanese" terminology and other Thai court lexicons normally reserved for royal figures alone were used not only with reference to common people, but also to displaced people such as two male Indian immigrants, a female prisoner of war from Patani, and a female

[29] *Kotmai tra sam duang*, vol.2, 335.

Mon immigrant from Tavoy. In other words, the social structure represented through the linguistic designation of status difference was intentionally subverted by a technique of, accordingly to Jit Phumisak, "contrasting" the normative referent and its usage (*kan chai thoi kham [...] lae chai kho khwam thi trong kan kham nan khue mi laksana khwam khat yaeng thang thoi kham lae kho khwam (contrast)*.)[30]

Even though the protagonist bears a princely title, Raden Landai, and is described ironically as having been the offspring of the king (*no nuea krasattra*),[31] he is by no means a prince of any origin. In fact, he is simply an Indian beggar who makes his living by playing a fiddle (*so*) along the street and reciting a never-completed few stanzas of verse drawn from a certain Thai classical poem, *Suwanna hong* (The Golden Swan), that he has overheard from somewhere. He "reigns" (*sawoei rat*) over his own shadowy kingdom, around a market place of the Great Swing (*sao chingcha*), near the Brahmin temple in Bangkok. His "palace" (*prasat*) is a crooked pillar, without any covering; the "glass wall" (*kamphaeng kaeo*) is in fact a barbed wire fence; his "soldiers" (*thahan*) on guard are actually stray dogs, which howl day and night, on alert to the ill-will of enemies. In contrast to those journeys in search of one another in the Panji tales, "Raden" Landai's daily journey is portrayed thus:

> Roaming with his fiddle and asking for rice in return, at every house,
> Taken as a provision for his living, all donated to him (*khong thawai*),
> No one would ever hate him, male or female,
> All will submit, surrender themselves, fearful of his power (*barami*),
> At dusk, night is approaching,

[30] Jit Phumisak, "Bot bat thang khannakhadi khong phra mahamontri" [The Literary Role of Phra Mahamontri], *Saithan*, 1957; reprinted in *Bot wikhro moradok wannakhadi thai* [Analysis Essays on the Heritage of Thai Literature] (Bangkok: Sattawat, 1980), 1-74, cf. 37.
[31] Phra Mahamontri, *Raden landai*, 11.

> Mosquitoes are teeming; he starts the smoke and gets set,
> Laying himself down (*banthom*) on the mat, a bejewelled couch (*thaen mani*),
> The "king" (*phumi*) is subdued, intoxicated with marijuana.[32]

While there was a certain norm that all these royal terminologies, e.g., "barami," "phumi," "banthom," "thaen mani," etc., were usually reserved for use with the monarchy and, in Thai literatures, with royal characters, Phra Mahamontri violently reverses their association with kingship and places them quite shockingly in the ordinary usage of the commoner. Once a forbidden royal glossary was satirized and displaced into its peculiar usage relating to the lowest stratum of Thai society, i.e., the beggar, the court's entire literary tradition was subverted and the court language and its linguistic ritual itself may have been turned up side down.

Likewise, the heroine, Nang Pradae, a war prisoner from Patani, is a kind of anti-heroic figure uncommon in the classical Thai literary tradition. Her body parts are grotesquely praised in extreme contrast to the usual literary aesthetics. She is extremely tall and thin (*sung rahong song rieo phrieo rut*), as beautiful as a camel from Batavia (Kalapa/Kelapa). As for her body, only her eyes are white, while her cheeks are as rugged as an Indian mulberry (*dang luk yo*), her nose is similar to a scythe (*phra kho*), her ears consist of big holes, her breasts are as droopy as boiled gourds (*buap tom*), and she is always chewing betel nut.[33] Similarly, her husband Thao Pradu Suriwong Song Kratak (literally, a king of Pradu who has divine origins and holds a stick) is an Indian migrant who farms milk cows in Bangkok; and Nang Kra-ae, Raden Landai's lover, is another

[32] Phra Mahamontri, *Raden landai*, 1.
[33] Phra Mahamontri, *Raden Landai*, 3-4.

displaced migrant, a female slave from Tavoy, who might follow a large migration of Mon people to Bangkok at the end of the King Rama I reign.[34]

In *Raden Landai*, there is no space for prince and princess, wars between good and evil, or the sufferings of the meritorious Bodhisattva; instead these are substituted by displaced people. In short, it is a morbid love story of a beggar, a displaced person, and a marginalized cluster of migrants in early nineteenth century Thai society. With this grotesque picture, the literary tradition was, thus, blown apart. In the Marxist analysis given by Jit Phumisak, Phra Mahamontri offered his readership a satirical, humoristic parody of the highly formalistic literature of Bangkok feudal society (*khwam talok khopkhan praphet siatsi lolian khuen ma nai tham klang wong kan wannakhadi thi khlang khuem song sak lae tem pai duai rabiap baep phaen khong sakdina*). In Jit's view, Phra Mahamontri introduced a new concept of laughter, a sense of humor (*arom khan*) to the Thai literary world. In short, he was a kind of literary terrorist who had just blasted away the limited boundaries of feudal literature (*phu phang talai wong lom lae krop an khap khaep khong wannakhadi sakdina*).[35]

To be fair, *Raden Landai* was definitely not the first classical literary work that played on the laughable elements of folk life. Earlier, possibly since the eighteenth century, the subject matter of a much more famous and reputed poem entitled *Khun*

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[34] Phra Mahamontri, *Raden Landai*, 9 and 29; for a history of Mon people in Siam, see Suporn Ocharoen, *Mon nai mueang thai* [The Mons in Thailand] (Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund, 1998).

[35] Jit, "Bot bat thang khannakhadi khong phra mahamontri," 73-4. For a fine treatment of Jit Phumisak's works, see Craig J. Reynolds, *Thai Radical Discourse: The Real Face of Thai Feudalism Today* (Ithaca: Cornell University, Southeast Asia Program, 1987); and see also his treatment on subversive Thai writers, "Sedition in Thai History: A Nineteenth-Century Poem and Its Critics" in his *Seditious Histories: Contesting Thai and Southeast Asian Past* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, in association with SUP, 2006).

chang khun phaen was low-ranking officials, an outcast bandit gang, folk culture and popular practices of Buddhism. However, the comical origin of its humor comes from a different source. A large portion of *Khun chang khun phaen* was crafted out of a folk story, its comic narrative arguably drawn from the folk's coarse language, their anxiety and foolish responses to a shameful situation such as, for instance, a blast of shit among the public. *Raden Landai*'s laughter, however, was distinctive in its subversive deployment of court language, hence structurally challenging the power of the formalistic literature of the court. Apart from the formation of a certain gap between the normative usage of court language in Thai poetry and the laughter emanating from a small, marginalized cluster of Bangkok subaltern inhabitants, *Raden Landai*'s subversive potential lay in the destructive displacement of the established relationship between the court's sacred signs and its royal referents. Nevertheless, it is possible that *Raden Landai* was not the first playful emplotment of the relationship between sign and referent in Thai poetry. Another comedy from the same period entitled *Si thanonchai* was apparently intent to broach a possible gap between signs and referents. In this text, a term intending to signify one thing is cunningly misread to mean another and, thus, generate a good laugh.[36]

With its displacement of the sign system, *Raden Landai* provided a new literary space, generating the possibility of innovation, which did not simply articulate a certain knowledge about "Java" drawn from the Panji tales. The subject of this new text was not anymore the relationship between sign and referent; it had rather shockingly changed its focus to mimicking the signs of "Javanese" appearance without any linkage between the

[36] *Si thanonchai samnuan kap* [Si Thanonchai, in a *kap* verse form], introduction by Suchit Wongthes (Bangkok: Matichon, 1997).

signs and their possible referents. This mid-nineteenth century literary work, which had once been suppressed as a lunatic text, was definitely a confusing dream, a phantasmagoria, to use the Marxist term referring to the "deceptive appearances of commodities as fetishes,"[37] in the sense that it produced a deceptive appearance of "Java" in the Thai literary establishment. In short, it was enthralled by the invention of empty signs.

A Phantasmagoria of "Javanese" Appearance: an "Insane" Poet

In his presidential address to the American Oriental Society at Baltimore in 1983, William Gedney made the peculiar remark that the *klon* verse form was perfected and exhausted fully by Sunthon Phu, to the extent that this "made it impossible for anyone after him to make significant use of the form, except as [... a] trivial use." One example, he went on, of such trivial usage is that of Khun Suwan's work.

> [Khun Suwan was] an old lady who lives in the palace during the reign of King Mongkut, in the 1850s and 1860s. She was regarded as *insane but harmless,* her *madness* taking the form of composing *kloon* verse in a kind of jabberwocky language. These *nonsense* compositions caused much amusement, and she was constantly asked to recite them, to the point where many people in the palace knew portions by heart, and someone wrote them down. Her most famous work is called *Phra Maleetheethay*. Most lines of this work begin with two or three words that make sense, but then the rest of the line consists of nonsense syllables.[38]

I would argue, contrary to Gedney, who has simply followed the Thai literary tradition,[39] that the "intoxicating effect" from immersing oneself in the euphonious sounds was not

[37] Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: the MIT Press, 1989), 81.
[38] Gedney, "The Rise and Decline of a Siamese Verse Form," in his *Thai and Indic Literary Studies,* 116.
[39] Gedney, "Siamese Verse Forms in Historical Perspective," 539.

exclusive to Khun Suwan. The musical effect of the euphonious sound was intentional and the intoxication of the melodious sound could, therefore, take different forms. One of these consisted of the great popularity among the Thai populace of the chanting of the versified Vessantara Jataka, performed with a distinctive rhythmic style with the intent to attract the audience to the Buddha's teachings. Its "musical effect," however, went beyond the anticipation that the audience was more intoxicated with euphonious sounds than the Dharma. In 1782, King Rama I had issued this special Sangha law (*kot phrasong*):

> At this time the entire populace of the kingdom is holding recitations of the Vessantara Jataka. However they do not respect the story as part of the Dharma. They listen only to the comical poetry [*thoi kham talok khanong*; literally, "comical and wild words"], which is of no benefit to them. Some of the monks who recite the story have not studied the Tipitaka. They know only the parts, which have been put into song-verse (*kap klon*) [*nuea khwam plae roi pen kap klon*; literally, translated contents that have been embroidered in a verse form or song-verse], which they then recite in a comical and obscene manner [*samdaeng thoi kham talok khanong yap cha*; literally, displaying comical, wild, and coarse words]. They are interested only in fame and riches. They have never desired to study and pass on the knowledge of the Dharma. This is damaging to the religion and encourages people to be careless in teaching the Dharma. Such people will suffer long torment in the four hells.[40]

The King had also asked the learned monks to check with the Tipitaka and found that both the monks who recited these comical and wild words, and their audiences, had taken the Dharma of Buddha teaching as the Atham, which literally means 'unrighteous,' 'unjust,' 'irreligious,' 'evil,' or 'wicked.' It is unlawful to display or represent the Dharma with singing sounds or "*siang an pen siang khap*," literally sound with

[40] "Kot phra song" [Sangha Code], no.1, *Kotmai tra sam duang*, Vol.3, 344-8. The quotation was translated by Patrick Jory, "The *Vessantara Jataka, Barami*, and the *Bodhisatta*-Kings: The Origin and Spread of a Thai Concept of Power," *Crossroads* 16(2): 36-78, cited from 59.

euphonious or melodious tones. And it is also inappropriate to compose or embroider the Dharma in euphonious verse forms of song style (*kap klon phichit duai akkhara pen phleng khap*, literally meaning "beautiful, euphonious and melodious verse in *kap* and *klon* verse forms in a manner of a song for singing"). Therefore, the recitation of the Vessantara Jataka should be restricted to only the full Pali canonical verses and the Commentaries. The recitation of and listening to sermons in verse forms with a singing, recitative style and playing with the words for comical purposes (*pen kan len huaro chuenchom*) were strictly forbidden.

Although the use of euphonious sound in reciting the sacred text risked demolishing or secularizing the religion, leading to the prohibition, the ban in giving sermons with dangerous melodious sounds seems to have had only a minimal effect. For many audiences, the principal attraction was the musical effect of these performances. "Monks became famous – and wealthy – for their skill in reciting particular chapters of the Vessantara Jataka, and skilled monks would receive invitations to perform at Thet Mahachat ceremonies far and wide," as Patrick Jory has observed.[41] Bearing some similarities to such widely disparate traditions as Western "operatic singing" or the Tagalog chanting of the Pasyon story,[42] the recitation of the Jataka made "listening to the lengthy narrative, which went on from before dawn until late at night on the same day, not only endurable but also highly entertaining for audiences." Its different styles and vocal repertoires had developed the recitation into "a highly refined vocal art" in which each region had developed its own highly distinctive vocal styles.[43] King Rama I, thereby, issued another Sangha Law in 1801, stating that some monks (*nak suat*; literally,

[41] Jory, "The *Vessantara Jataka*, *Barami*, and the *Bodhisatta*-Kings," 60-1.
[42] See Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution*, chapter 1.
[43] Jory, "The *Vessantara Jataka*, *Barami*, and the *Bodhisatta*-Kings," 60-1.

the reciter) do not behave properly in reciting "suat phramalai." They do not recite in accordance with the Pali content, instead they sing (*rong pen lamnam*; literally, sing with a ballad melody) in the style of Khaek (here means Melayu or Muslim), Chinese, Vietnamese, Mon, or Westerner. Whenever the populace holds a cremation ceremony, the code states, they should ask the monks to recite only the Pali canon, not the story of Phra Malai. They could ask the *kharuelat* (literally, the laity) to recite or chant the Phra Malai, but it was also strictly forbidden to recite or chant in a comical way and in the form of a wild ballad verse-song (*lamnam*).[44]

The chanting was not contained only at the religious ritual, but became a kind of leisure activity for the local readership throughout the country; meanwhile some manuscripts were owned by the well-off local elite. Since possessing a manuscript was quite extravagant, whether hiring a scribe to copy for personal usage or laboring over it himself, it was kept safe as a precious treasure. The reader, thus, is entreated that he should be cautious in taking good care of the manuscript.

> Some men are foolish,
> Speaking arrogantly,
> Lying disrespectfully,
> The book said it correctly,
> Interpolating, making it more colorful,
> Making it distorted.
>
> Some are lazy,
> Lying down when they chant,
> The book is on fire,
> Some open their mouths carelessly,
> Red saliva from chewing betel streams out,
> Making the book stained also by a torch's ash,
> The book/script was erased, became unclear.

[44] "Kot phra song," no.10, *Kotmai tra sam duang*, Vol.3, 387-91.

> These kinds of men,
> Will go to the deepest hell,
> No need to give a warning,
> Falling down to be a habitant [of the hell],
> Let hell be their home,
> Because their hearts
> Are vicious, being sinful.[45]

Although the *Klonsuat* manuscripts could be found widely throughout Thailand, each region had its own different versions.[46] This practice of chanting the *Klonsuat* was quite popular down to the early twentieth century when Chaophraya Phatsakorawong wrote an introduction to the publication of *Samut malai* (Book of Malai Bikkhu) in 1911. Though this kind of book is not popular in Bangkok at the present, he remarked, "it is still highly respected in the provincial cities (*huamueang monthon*). For example, the people still use it in chanting at marital ceremonies (*suat mongkhon bao-sao*) in Samutsakhon province."[47] Once, Phraya Anuman Rajadhon also had a chance to observe the laity's chanting of this *Klonsuat* poetry in the Wat Phrathat temple, the main monastery in Nakhon Si Thammarat, southern Thailand. Assuming that these were romantic stories drawn from the Jataka tales written in a simple language for the benefit of illiterate common people, he said,

> During the Buddhist lent period (August-October) when many people repaired to the *wat* (Buddhist temple and monastery) to hear sermons preached by the monks and to observe certain religious commandments and to do other merit making, certain literate persons, usually ex-monks, took the opportunity to read from a book of such kind of literature to the congregation during their leisured intervals. There used to be a number of these readers in corners of the corridor and other

[45] Trisin Bunkhachon, *Klonsuat phak klang* [Chanting Poetries in Central Thailand] (Bangkok: Thai Studies Center, Chulalongkorn University, 2004), 23.
[46] Trisin, *Klonsuat phakklang*, 1-40.
[47] Bunthuean, "Introduction," *Nang uthai klonsuat*, 5.

> shaded places within the precinct of the temple, and the way they read was a sort of recitation wit modulation of the voice.[48]

It is not sufficient, thus, to treat Khun Suwan's poem simply as a work of a lunatic who, intoxicated with poetry and in a state of uncontrollable excitement, blasted out euphonious sounds in "jabberwocky-like nonsense language," as Gedney suggested. In order to posit her work properly, I would argue that it was in fact a stroke of genius that is unmistakably the effect of the (non)translation of the "Javanese" lexical elements in the Panji tales.

Perhaps we might qualify Tamara Loos's statement that "There are no 'voices' of women from the Inner Palace of King Mongkut available to historians today,"[49] for Khun Suwan was none other than one of the few female poets from the Inner Palace of the nineteenth century. Born as a daughter of a high ranking official, Khun Suwan had been presented by her family to work in the Inner Court since she was young. During King Rama III's reign, she had even been in the service of Princess Apsonsudathep, one of the most beloved daughters of the king. Khun Suwan was an intellectual of the period. Her voice was not only "insane" according to the literary tradition, especially as stated by Prince Damrong in his foreword to Khun Suwan's work when it was first published by the State Library in 1920, but it was also the voice of female, rebellious transgression that was extremely shocking for the male-dominated heterosexual society. In one of her poems, *Mom pet sawan* (literally, the Heavenly Duck Lady; duck or "pet" in Thai also refers to the female sexual organ), Khun Suwan notoriously portrayed a detailed,

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[48] Anuman Rajadhon, *Essays on Thai Folklore* {1968} (Bangkok: Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation, 1988), 66-7.
[49] Tamara Loos, "Sex in the Inner City: The Fidelity between Sex and Politics in Siam," *Journal of Asian Studies* Vol.64, No.4 (November 2005): 881-909, cf. 884.

scandalized scene of female homosexual eroticism in the Inner Palace, a practice which was strictly forbidden among the court ladies.[50] Apparently, such love scenes were not unusual for Thai classical literary works, although they were represented through the literary signs of natural phenomena, but the reigning normative sexuality of the era was heterosexual practice in a polygamous society.[51] Having been a normal sexual practice of the court ladies in the nineteenth century to the extent that King Mongkut himself had to ask his daughters to refrain from engaging in this same-sex practice, this is arguably the only full account of female eroticism from the Thai court. Another piece from Khun Suwan's unpublished manuscripts, *Phra et yong* (a play on words in which one has to reverse the sounds in order to find a real meaning; in this case it should be read, "Phra ong yet," literally, "the king copulates" or "copulation with the king"), was deemed to be morally harmful, strictly forbidden to be read in the National Archives, even now.[52]

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[50] Khun Suwan and Phra Mahamontri, *Botlakhon rueang phra malethethai, rueang unnarut roi rueang, rueang raden landai, klonphlengyao rueang mompetsawan, rueang phra-akan prachuan khong krommuen apsonsudathep* [Verse Drama: Phra Malethethai, Unnarut in Conjuncture with Other Hundred Tales, Raden Landai, and two Ballads on the Heaven Duck Lady and the Krommuen Apsonsudathep's Illness] (Bangkok: Bannakharn, 1971), 79-128. For a treatment of female sexual eroticism in the Thai court, see Tamara Loos, "Sex in the Inner City." However, though she "actually had included the document by Khun Suwan in the original draft," it is rather disappointing that Tamara Loos had been asked by the journal to remove a discussion about this document from her published text; personal communication, 25 February 2006. For an account of female homosexuality in Thailand, see Megan J. Sinnott, *Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

[51] For a treatment of Thai polygamy, see Craig J. Reynolds's article, "A Thai-Buddhist Defense of Polygamy," in his *Seditious Histories: Contesting Thai and Southeast Asian Pasts*, 185-213.

[52] NA, Division of Old Manuscripts, "Phra malethethai, phra et yong, unnarut roi rueang" [Prince Malethethai, Prince Et Yong, and Unnarut in Conjuncture with other Hundred Tales], composed by Khun Suwan, cabinet no.114, 2/5, old black Thai booklet (*samut thai dam*) no.1, a donation of Nai Nit Wangnoi Thongyu, 8 June 1923. Though I knew of the existence of this manuscript and its general content, and the vulgar play on words of the title, the officials of the National Archives denied me access to this document, even

However, the most crazy "originarily creative act"[53] of Khun Suwan must be her two remarkable poems, namely *Unnarut roi rueang* (Unnarut in Conjunction with another Hundred Tales) and *Phra Malethethai* (Prince Malethethai). Though masterfully composed according to Thai poetical conventions, these two poems were previously unimaginable. It was not the plot, the style, or the subject matter that was new; it was rather its playfulness with the whole literary repertoire that was oriented toward the destruction of the literary tradition.

In *Unnarut roi rueang*, the audience was presented with the first non-emplotted, though readable and euphonious, "intertextual text" of Thai classical literature. Khun Suwan had mobilized almost all the best- known figures from classical Thai literature and woven them into her (non-emplotted) story, in the style of a literary montage. The signs are violently removed from their context, placed together alongside other signs. Although a certain linkage between the signs and their referents is there, they are not quite related to each other within the text. This work is like an imaginary space of conjuncture in which characters from other literary works could travel through, talk with each other, and flash off. Only within the first few opening stanzas, Prince Unnarut (from *Unnarut*), Nang Chanti (from *Sang thong*), Inao Kurepan (from *Inao*), Suwanmali (from *Phra Apaimani*), Chansuda (from *Khawi*), Phra Samut But Ratu (from *Wiwa phrasamut* and *Inao*), and a certain giant (*asurin*) all appear in the same (non-contextualized) text. For instance, we have the following stanzas:

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with an official letter from my university confirming my identity and my research. For a summary and an excerpt of this pornographic manuscript, see "Chudao" [Buntuen Siworaphot], "Phra et yong: hatsadiamkhadi khong khun suwan" [Prince Et Yong: a Comedy of Khun Suwan], *Sinlapa watthanatham*, Vol.17, No.10 (August 1996): 214-5.

[53] Morris, *In the Place of Origins*, 22.

> Oh, you, old hag (*i-oei i-thao*)
> I shall cut off your head (*ku cha ban klao kesa*);
> Having boasted that you are so good (*uat wa tua di*),
> Why did you run away (*wing ni yai na*);
> Having clubbed Srimala (*boi ti srimala*),
> My daughter (*luk kha tham mai*).
>
> Oh, my powerful lord (*song oei song det*),
> Where is Prince Naraithibet (*phra naraithibet pai yu nai*),
> Why have you whipped (*phra ma boi ti*),
> Thong Prasi (*thong prasi thammai*);
> Khun Phaen is running away (*khun phaen wing pai*),
> Muen Wai is running in (*muen wai wing ma*).
>
> Oh, how much wrath (*khaen oie khan nak*),
> Prince Laksamana was angry with Princess Usa (*phra lak kriu krot nang usa*);
> How could you take sides with (*pen rai pai khao*),
> The King of Lanka (*duai chao longka*);
> Having mobilized a troop of giants (*khum phon asura*),
> Why have you been out here? (*ok ma tham mai*).[54]

To read this work, therefore, one needs to have a certain knowledge of the entire landscape of Thai classical literature. In contrast to the charge of insanity by Prince Damrong, that she had lost her common sense and had become intoxicated with composing *klon* poetry (*sia sati tae mai khlang khlai andai pen tae fung pai nai krabuan taeng klon*),[55] Khun Suwan's imaginary meta-text had instead transgressed a boundary of the normative literary tradition. That is, it was a tale without emplotment that encompassed the whole literary repertoire, while using a perfect prosodic convention. In other words, this is a poem about the poems. More likely, this is a confusing dream about

[54] Khun Suwan and Phra Mahamontri, *Botlakhon rueang phra malethethai, rueang unnarut roi rueang, rueang raden landai*..., 40-1. Srimala is a female character from *Khun chang khun phaen*; Thong Prasi, Khun Phaen, Muen Wai come from the same folk story, *Khun chang khun phaen*; Princess Usa is the heroine from *Unnarut*; Prince Laksamana and the King of Lanka, from the *Ramayana*.

[55] Prince Damrong, "Athibai rueang bot lakhon khong khun suwan" [An Explanation of Khun Suwan's Verse Drama], in Khun Suwan and Phra Mahamontri, *Botlakhon rueang phra malethethai, rueang unnarut roi rueang, rueang raden landai*..., 4-5.

Thai classical literature, in the sense that readers should be able to recognize their beloved characters from the entire literary repertoire appearing together at once in the carnival. The entire Thai classical literary entity was broken down; only its signs were taken and placed together, here and there, but all signs were only relevant as referents with their own contexts.

Khun Suwan's *Phra Malethethai,* another frightening literary work for her contemporary readership, essentially represented nothing but rather was full of empty sound. Before we could discuss further, it is essential to have a brief glance at an example of the failed translation of this (unsignified) text.

1. At that time,
   Prince Malethethai Malaitha (name)
   Resided on the golden throne of Kapola (a city name),
   With happiness *pala kapele*.

2. One day, he would *maluektuek*
   In the jungle, *maruekkhe*
   Then he would go sight-seeing, *malomte*
   Maloto pope malutu.

3. Having a thought, Prince Male thus *pepa*
   Maletai *khaikhla maruchu*
   Went directly *phlat phlu*
   To the palace of King Pola (name).

4. After arriving, he comes for *taluttut*
   Bowing his head, (his face was) wrinkled *kalata*.
   Prince Malethai pays obeisance to both of his parents,
   Informing them about his itinerary (plan) *malaotao*.

5. Since I myself Malethe(thai) now
   Am not feeling well *kangaokao*,
   I would ask for leave from your both frowning faces
   Traveling *malai* to *pao* the forest.

6. When
   King Thao Pola Kapangan (name)

And his queen Nang Tala Kapalan (name)
Have learned *sadup truphan malethe*.

7. *Malokthok* informed that (he) will leave too,
The forest; why would he, otherwise he might deviate *phle*
Maloetoe stupidly foul and aberrant.
They therefore forbid Prince Malethe Maletha from going.

8. You should not go *chaiche kepelu*;
Please be sympathetic to your father, Maletha.
But Prince Phra Malethai kept beseeching *malaocha*,
The King then had to let his son go *malapong*.

9. Then
Prince Malethai took leave *mangongkong*,
And ordered his Minister *kacharong*
To harness the horse, *papong kanguengkueng*.

10. Then
The Minister received an order *kangang kueng*,
Without delay, they suddenly ran *maluengtueng*
Once *Malantan* had arrived, they informed each other,

11. That, now there was an order from Prince Malethe,
To harness the horse *pape kangankan*,
As he wants a royal wandering *maletan*.
Having said this, they persuaded each other to *malaengtaeng*.

12. Binding a saddle and harness *malaotao*,
Planting a peg *pao kangaengkaeng*,
Preparing all the troops of *paengmaeng*,
Then informing (the prince) *maraengta*.

According to Jit Phumisak, the sense of humor in this work lies in its usage of intelligible "words" that seems understandable (*talok doi withi chap ao kham an mai pen lo pen phai lae mai pen phasa khao ma chai sot saek tae thawa hai fang du ru rueang*); and the inducement of laughter by the usage of clumsy sounds (*thoi kham loe thoe*) and

their lack of emplotment (*khwam mai pen rueang*).[56] In fact, this poem is a more radical exercise by Khun Suwan in her playful manipulation of linkages between sign, sound, and referent.

If the poem by Phra Mahamontri is a literary montage in which sign was removed from referent and placed alongside other signs, the linkage between sign and referent nevertheless could be established in terms of its relation to the Thai literary repertoire. The poem by Khun Suwan, however, is more radical in the sense that a lot of the sounds are patently empty signs, relating to nothing. In other words, there is no linkage between sign and referent.

Instead of branding her work as the product of a lunatic, I would argue that this radical de-linking of sign and referent was a side-effect of the influence of the "Javanese" tongue in the Thai Panji tales. Rather than being simply a romantic tale about some royal figures, the tales invoked a certain fear about overnaming, shifting identities and even counterfeit identities. Having been aroused by the exoticism of supposedly "Javanese" sounds, the Thai elite was quite excited and anxious to respond. The different versions of *Inao* were, thus, reproduced and it became possible to compose a parody that blew up the social structure through a displaced usage of those "Javanese" signs in the court-language poems. Aiming to simulate and signify a "Javanese appearance," Khun Suwan parodied *Inao*, and fooled her audience, by aping those foreign sounds without any real referent -- a signifier without reference to any sign system, simply empty sounds that lead nowhere. This text, full of free-floating signifiers, was unintentionally a subversion of the linkage between sign and external referent that was the main feature of the Panji tales, which

[56] Jit, "Bot bat thang khannakhadi khong phra mahamontri," 46. The term "thoi kham" here is better rendered as merely "sound," not ordinary word, which possibly contains meaning.

could not provoke any meaning unless one translated those non-translated signifiers back into the Thai sign system.

In fact, the possibility of communicative failure as imagined in *Phra Malethethai* was not anything new. Most likely the subject had been broached by the cultural and sexual encounter between the Javanese and the Melayu in the Melaka scene. Whilst the linguistic boundary was fictively drawn in that conjunction, the empty sounds were a poetic phantasm of the *lingua franca* articulated through those exotic sounds termed "Javanese" that kept haunting the early nineteenth century Thai readership. In short, it was a side-effect of the fetish of the "Javanese" tongue.

CHAPTER 6

King Chulalongkorn's Voyages to Java, the Quest for the Panji Land, and Orientalism

By the latter half of the eighteenth century, Java as a logo comprised of historical, cultural and political components was substituted with a proper name: Panji/Inao. The Dutch power that was firmly established in Java after the Giyanti Treaty and had sent 1,400 guns to King Taksin in 1777 was, thus, inscribed in the Thai royal chronicle as the "chaophraya krung panyi," the principal minister of the Panji kingdom.[1] Seemingly, this term was only possible within the Thai literary tradition, impregnated with a social memory of the imagined Javanese culture that was articulated through the cultural reproduction and consumption of the Panji tales.

At first glance, I had thought that this Panji kingdom was one of the Javanese courts that presented those guns to King Taksin. Nonetheless, it was clear enough that the King had purchased these weapons of destruction from the Dutch in Batavia. Apart from guns that Siam wanted to purchase in their mobilization against the Burmese and suppression of other rival or recalcitrant groups, King Taksin had also asked Batavia to restore its factory in Siam in 1768. According to the Dutch materials,

> In April 1770 it was decided that guns and flints should be sent to the Phrakhlang, and on 26 January 1773 a letter written by the Phrakhlang on behalf of the King was received with the usual brief ceremony. In May 1773, however, the Phrakhlang's repeated request that the Company send a ship with merchandise to

[1] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya*, 596. Regarding the Giyanti Treaty in 1755, see M.C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi 1749-1792: A History of the Division of Java* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 67-95.

> Siam was turned down, and as from May 1775 the King had to pay an advance in cash when purchasing guns from Batavia.[2]

It is unlikely that the Dutch presence in Java was unknown to the Thai elite in the late eighteenth century. The Dutch factory was still active in Ayutthaya until 29 September 1765, when Abraham Werndlij - the last director of the Dutch factory in Siam - secretly sailed out from the Chaophraya River, only a few years before Ayutthaya fell on 7 April 1767.[3] Furthermore, an earlier entry in the same chronicle records that in late 1771 the Siamese court was presented with more than two thousand guns by "khaek mueang yaikatra," literally the Muslim/guest from Jayakarta, a former name of Batavia regularly used in Thai manuscripts.[4] The query is thus, how could the Thai royal scribe associate Dutch power in Java with the Panji kingdom?

Apart from its conviction that the powerful Dutch presence was unlikely to be dislodged from the archipelagos, the Thai elite was also dictated by a logic of legitimacy of Dutch power in Java. As his endless adventures in the Panji tales eventually brought the entire Javanese kingdoms under his throne, Panji/Inao had become a highly charged referent that the Thai elite had sorted out from its literary tradition. It was not only because Panji/Inao's journeys and conquests reflected the political nature and make-up of states in traditional Java, but seemingly also because his name itself invoked allegiance and legitimacy. The Dutch governor-general in Java was, thus, encoded as a Panji figure that was assigned to the Javanese logo.

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[2] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 55.
[3] Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat*, 51-4.
[4] *Chronicle of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya*, 554-6; see also Damrong, *Ruang praditsathan phrasong sayam wong nai langka thawip*, 200 and 269.

In this chapter, I shall discuss King Chulalongkorn's journeys to the Western colonies and the West itself during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Later, I shall show how the Panji tales became a crucial source of categories for the Thai elite to understand Java, especially through King Chulalongkorn's views of Java and his quests for the Panji/Inao's originary traces, either historical, archaeological, or cultural. Finally, the European Orientalist influence on Thai perceptions of Java will also be tackled.

King Chulalongkorn's Voyage to Java

Having been intrigued by the magic of Western modernity and its rationality, introduced to Thai society by the missionaries around the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Thai elite had perplexedly experienced a fall of their old world. According to the American Missionary D.B. Bradley, the modus operandi of the world had altogether changed. Siam no longer existed within the same old space but had already moved into a new sphere alongside the European nations (*krung sayam dut luean chak thi-thi khoei tang yu nan pai tang yu mai nai prathet yurop*).[5] New knowledge was necessary; establishing a university was, thus, an urgent task of the Thai government in order to cope with this new political environment. Having discursively coupled scientific rationality and Christianity, Bradley suggested that Buddhism was a source of darkness and ignorance. In order to overcome its backwardness, Thai society had to convert to Christianity because it was the origin of European modernity and "all things that were invented in the West possess magical properties and were more advanced" (*banda sing*

[5] D.B. Bradley, "Yuniwoesiti" [University], *Nangsue chotmaihet The Bangkok Recorder*, vol.1, no.7 (1 June 1865): 37-8.

khong chueng koet mi ma tae prathet bueang trawantok nan pen khong prasoet wiset di kwa kan).[6]

The Thai elite, then, was faced with the challenge of a nascent mode of power relations that was enforced by scientific rationality, technological progress and a new mode of production. Elements within the elite, led by the monarchy, responded by adopting European modernity and its rationality as their ideal and attempted in various ways to position themselves within the new mode of power relations. King Mongkut started his "civilizing" project once he came to power in 1851. For instances, new treaties of free trade and extraterritoriality were signed with the major powers, students were sent aboard, Western staff were recruited, the royal family was educated in the Western fashion, and cultural practices were gradually modified.[7] However, tragedy struck with Mongkut's unexpected death in 1868, and his son King Chulalongkorn had to be crowned even though, at the age of fifteen, he was not well-prepared.

In order to educate the young king, the regent decided to send Chulalongkorn to Singapore and Batavia in 1871 in order to gain first-hand experience of colonial modernity and its administration.[8] Ironically, a year later when Chulalongkorn wanted to see the real European culture and civilization, his wish was rejected. After a bitter negotiation with his regent who insisted firmly that the king's demand for an educational voyage to Europe was unacceptable, a compromise was reached with another tour to

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[6] D.B. Bradley, "Trachu yang nueng" [A Balance Judge], *Nangsue chotmaihet The Bangkok Recorder*, vol.1, no.9 (1 July 1865): 58-9.
[7] See Thongchai Winichakul, "The Quest for 'Siwilia': A Geographical Discourse of Civilizational Thinking in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Siam," *Journal of Asian Studies* vol.59, no.3 (August 2000): 528-549.
[8] Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, *Khwam song cham* [Recollections] {1846} (Bangkok: Matichon, 2003), 159-160.

British India in 1872. It took almost three decades before Chulalongkorn could fulfill his long-standing desire when he journeyed to Europe in 1897.[9]

It could be argued that Chulalongkorn's first trip to Java in 1871 had political ramifications. A recent study even claims that the King aimed to represent Siam as a strong and independent nation on an equal footing with the Western imperial powers. As author Kannikar Sartproong puts it:

> [V]isibility was the main aim of his journey to the South. After all, the king made his trip not only to see 'civilization' in operation, but also to make the British and the Dutch aware that Siam itself was a strong nation and that it wanted to participate in the political and diplomatic games in the Malay world and beyond… Bangkok was united in the effort to make the Kingdom of Siam visible as an independent state that deserved respect.[10]

It seems more likely, however, that the principal objective of Chulalongkorn, and plausibly his regent as well, was to acquire empirical knowledge of colonial modernity. During his stopover in Singapore, the king was fascinated with the colony's progress and prosperity (*khwam charoen rungrueang*), signs of which were the post-office, church, Raffles College, hotels, hospitals, prison, court, Botanic garden, and so on. For Chulalongkorn, Singapore was "the gateway" (*pratu ban*) to the outside world.[11]

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[9] Damrong, *Khwam song cham*, 168-170. For a seminal work on Chulalongkorn's tours and a manufacture of his modern image, see Maurizio Peleggi, *Lords of Things: the Fashioning of the Siamese Monarch's Modern Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002).

[10] Kannikar Sartproong, *A True Hero: King Chulalongkorn of Siam's visit to Singapore and Java in 1871* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leiden, 2004), 2.

[11] King Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thieo chawa kwa song duean*, ro.so.115 [Journal of a Journey to Java of Over the Two Months, 1896] (Bangkok: Sophon phiphat thanakon, 1925), 3.

In spite of his short state visit to Batavia and Semarang, the king paid much attention to observing the colonial administration and its implementation of scientific knowledge and technologies. Among the modern developments he witnessed were arms factories, a military barrack, public schools, a cadet school, hospitals and a medical laboratory, the judiciary system, court and prison, museum and artifacts, railway construction, and so on.[12] Being just in his late teens, the king was fairly excited by the locomotive and railways; conversely, only a few Javanese cultural aspects attracted his attention. For example, he witnessed a Javanese dance performance in Semarang organized by "Raden Athipati Panyi" [Raden Adipati Panji]. The latter was, in fact, Kangjeng Gusti Pangeran Arya Adipati Mangkunagara IV (r.1853-81), peculiarly mentioned in the Thai chronicles as "chao khaek mueang kalang," which literally means "the Muslim/foreign prince from the Kalang kingdom."[13]

For over a quarter of century, as is well known, King Chulalongkorn put some effort into transforming Siam along the same pattern as the British and Dutch colonial administrations. He organized a centralized bureaucracy, forged a territorial state, and introduced mass communication systems such as railways, telegraph lines and

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[12] *Chot mai het sadet praphat ko chawa nai ratchakan thi 5 thang 3 khrao* [Chronicles of the King Chulalongkorn's Three Voyages to Java] (Bangkok: Sophon phitphat thanakon, 1920), 29-32.

[13] *Chot mai het sadet praphat ko chawa nai ratchakan thi 5 thang 3 khrao*, 32. It should be noted here that in the Javanese version of Panji stories, Keling is the alternative name of Koripan (Kuripan in Thai). I was also informed by an anonymous reader that while Keling was associated with the Brantas river delta region, there is, however, no specific site that has been identified yet as the original place of the Koripan palace. Further, the "Kalang" people are a specific ethnic group identified as having a special status by the Central Javanese courts.

steamships.[14] By the end of the century, however, it was no longer scientific progress and colonial modernity that fascinated the king. On the contrary, in his two published journals of another two trips to Java in 1896 and 1901, his preoccupation was with the cultures, histories and archaeological artifacts of the island.[15]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Europe was at the advanced stage of its civilizational progress, carefully articulated and materialized through the fashionable World's Fair that began with the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations at Crystal Palace in London, 1851, and thereafter became "a competitive ritual among the industrial countries to boast their advance of science and technology, industrial developments, and other evidence of progress."[16] As its ethos was to represent the zenith of European civilization, the exoticism of backwardness and a bygone, nostalgic past was thus an integral part of the World's Fair from the beginning and, likewise, the archaeological and cultural artifacts of the remote colonies had become commodities for cultural consumption. In the Netherlands itself, the growing archaeological interest in the Dutch East Indies, partly inspired by the London Great Exposition and the recent discovery of the ruins of ancient Troy in 1871-3 that "had

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[14] See David K. Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969); Tej Bunnag, *The Provincial Administration of Siam, 1892-1915* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993); Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977).

[15] Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thiao chawa kwa song duean* [Journal of a Journey to Java of Over the Two Months], hereafter cited in text as *RTCW*; and *Phraratchaniphon chotmai raiwan khong phrabatsomdet phrachulachomklao chaoyuhua muea sadet praphat ko chawa khrang lang* [Journal of Chulalongkorn's Last Voyage to Java] (Bangkok: Rongphim thai, 1923).

[16] Thongchai, "The Quest for 'Siwilai'," 540.

caused a tremendous stir throughout Europe," had finally led to the Dutch colonial exhibition in Amsterdam in 1883.[17]

Having been sandwiched between the two European powers since the mid-nineteenth century, according to Thongchai Winichakul, "Siam was anxious about its position among modern nations" and had attempted to play with this world's latest fashion by sending its delegates and cultural artifacts to join several major World's Fairs, for example, in Paris (1867, 1889 and 1900), in Philadelphia (1876), in Chicago (1893), in St. Louis (1904), and in Turin (1911).[18] In Siam, there was no doubt that the impact of archaeological and historical interests and the idea of civilizational progress would eventually lead to the instituting of *Samakhom suep suan khong buran nai prathet sayam* (literally, "Society to investigate the ancient things/artifacts in Siam") or *Borankhadi samoson* (The Antiquarian Society of Siam) in 1907. In King Chulalongkorn's words,

> Those many countries which have been formed into nations and countries uphold that the history of one's nation and country is an important matter to be known clearly and accurately through study and teaching. It is a discipline for evaluating ideas and actions as right or wrong, good or bad, as a means to inculcate love of one's nation and land... The idea is not to create a history of Siam quickly. I hope that we will help one another to collect the historical evidence and help one another to appraise the material and clarify what is not yet clear through each applying his wisdom and intelligence… If someone comes up with better interpretation and more accurate reasoning, we should happily appreciate the major benefit of having a clearer and more reliable history of Siam.[19]

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[17] Marieke Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles: The Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies at the World Exhibition, 1880-1931*, translated by Beverley Jackson (Singapore: SUP, 2006), 196 and 50-105.
[18] Thongchai, "The Quest for 'Siwilai'," 529 and 540-1.
[19] Chris Baker, "The Antiquarian Society of Siam: Speech of King Chulalongkorn," *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol.89, no.1 & 2 (2001): 95-99, cf. 95 and 97-8.

In the attempt to forge a history of the nation, histories, cultures, and archaeological artifacts had thus become the focus of Chulalongkorn's and the Thai elite's enthrallments and pursuits. Historical writings were compiled and published; cultures and traditions were explained; national heritages were collected and museumized.[20]

When King Chulalongkorn, now in his forties, undertook the second journey to Java in 1896 and his first to Europe in 1897, he attempted to refashion his image into one with a European outlook. In order to prepare his trip to Europe in 1897, the King had attempted to abolish all Thai cultural practices (*loek yang thai-thai mot*), such as betel chewing, and to cultivate European life-styles, e.g., dressing himself in modern clothes and whitening his teeth.[21] Preoccupied with the idea of civilizing progress, the King was thus quite impressed with what John Anderson, the governor of Singapore, said in his 1907 reception speech: That Siam's progress in the civilizational process was not superficial, but quite deeply rooted (*prakot chat wa nai chai kae rusuek wa mueang rao mai chai siwilaisechan yang phio-phio dai chap lak yuetman mak laeo*).[22]

Similar to those European souls who had come to the East for its exotic culture, and partly influenced by a growing interest in studies of the Orient that had intrigued some brilliant local minds to spend their labors in studying their own cultures and

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[20] See Thongchai Winichakul, "The Other Within: Travel and Ethno-Spatial Differentiation of Siamese Subjects 1885-1910," in *Civility and Savagery: Social Identity in Tai States*, edited by Andrew Turton (London: Curzon Press, 2000).
[21] Chulalongkorn, *Phra ratcha hatthalekha muea sadet phra ratcha damnoen praphat urop pho.so. 2440* [King Chulalongkorn's Correspondence to Queen Si Phatcharinthra from his Voyage to Europe in 1896], 2 volumes (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1962), vol.1, 4-5.
[22] Chulalongkorn, *Klai ban* [Away from Home] {1907}, 2 volumes (Bangkok: Phraephitthaya, 1943), vol.1, 21.

histories,[23] Chulalongkorn represented himself now as a man of culture and, thus, the first place he visited in Batavia in 1896 was a museum. According to his plan, it was not one but two museums that he had planned to visit on May 26, and it was annoying (*tem thon thi dieo*) that he could accomplish only one due to a shortage of time (*RTCW* 40).

Apart from the ancient artifacts and elements of Javanese culture such as Buddha images, Hindu gods, *kris*, the inscriptions, the puppet shadows and the native languages, King Chulalongkorn also expressed interest in the banquets, the social clubs, the balls and the opera house. On the very third night in Batavia, the amateur opera was featuring a German tale, *Faust*, composed by "Khuno," definitely Charles Gounod (1818-93), a famous and influential French composer in the nineteenth century. As a great composer, Gounod was best remembered for *Faust*, based on the play by Goethe and first performed in 1859 at the Théâtre-Lyrique in Paris with "an instant success."[24] Meanwhile, his *Roméo et Juliette* (1867) was also remembered as "the romantic and highly melodious" opera.[25] For King Chulalongkorn, the performance was just great and its singer's voice was quite extraordinary and really beautiful (*len ko di rong ko phro yangying*), even for his Thai entourage who had seen the opera before in Paris. Personally, said Chulalongkorn, he had never seen or heard any opera that was better than this one; it was almost similar to the professional performance he had once attended in Calcutta in 1872

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[23] For discussion of the natives' efforts in attempting to understand their own cultures, see Kenji Tsuchiya, "Javanology and the Age of Ranggawarsita: An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Javanese Culture," in *Reading Southeast Asia: Translation of Contemporary Japanese Scholarship on Southeast Asia*, edited by Takashi Shiraishi (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1990); see also Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (London: Verso, 2006), 9-25.
[24] Wendy Thompson, *The Great Composers: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Lives and Works of the World's Best-Loved Composers* (London: Hermes House, 2001), 120.
[25] See, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Gounod.

(*mai khoei hen rue khoei fang di ying kwa ni muean kap thi pen profetchanaeo len thi kalakatta*). "Everything is just perfect," he wrote, "The costume is simply beautiful (*khrueang taengtua ko ngam*), the stage is neatly arranged according to any good opera house (*rong ko chat di mi konlakai tham thamniam rong oppra*) (*RTCW* 47-50)."

We do not have much data about the opera that King Chulalongkorn had seen in Calcutta in 1872 and taken as his comparison, but it was coincidentally also based on Goethe's *Faust*.[26] Given the importance of the *Faust* story to Marshall Berman's account of the Western spirit of modernity in his famous work, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, it is tempting to argue that the tragedy would have contributed not the least to the King's perception of modernity.[27] It was not accidental, therefore, that Chulalongkorn took pains to summarize the operatic plot and praise its performance in Batavia. The opera would be taken by the Siamese monarch as a sign of European civilization for his cultural consumption during his tours to Europe in 1897 and 1907. As one of his Ministers noted, the king attended the performance of *Don Juan* at the Grand Opera in Paris on September 15, 1897.[28] Meanwhile, during his second voyage to Europe, Chulalongkorn visited the opera house not once but on several occasions: twice in Turin, once in Florence, twice in Paris and so on.[29] By the time of his visit to Paris in September 1907, Chulalongkorn had also witnessed Giacomo Puccini's renowned opera *Madam Butterfly* (1904), the tragic tale of a Japanese geisha that, as a popular historian of the great composers has noted,

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[26] Sachchidanand Sahai, *India in 1872 as Seen by the Siamese* (Delhi: B.R. Pub, 2002).
[27] Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: the Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 37-86.
[28] Phraya Sisahathep (Seng), *Chotmaihet sadet praphat yurop ro.so.116* [Chronicle of King Chulalongkorn's Voyage to Europe in 1897] {1907}, 6 volumes (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1972), v.4, 194.
[29] Chulalongkorn, *Klai ban*, vol.1, 239-40, 246-7 and 277-8; vol.2, 295-7 and 437-40.

"took the operatic world by storm."[30] Chulalongkorn himself was delighted with the beautiful voice and elegant performance (*siang phro lae chai bot di mak*) of Madame Carré who was featured as the leading figure, Madame Butterfly.[31]

With this initiation into European high culture, Chulalongkorn did not approach Java in 1896 as an apprentice monarch observing the experiments of European modernity in the colonies, as had been the case two decades earlier. On the contrary, in 1896 he came as a mature sovereign who had freshly experienced imperial aggression.[32] In this context, Java was thus viewed from within a certain logic of the civilizing process. Generally, the journal of Chulalongkorn's voyage to Java in 1896 offers us a series of commentaries on society and daily life in the Dutch colony that reveal various features of its native cultures as well as colonial modernity. Chulalongkorn carefully describes not only the printing house, the prison, the lunatic asylum, the botanic garden, the locomotive factory and the irrigation-system, but also less visible features such as sexual disease and Japanese whores, Dutch cultural practices (for instance, the Dutch adoption of local dress and native's cuisine), interracial marriage, the plantation estate and the remnants of the Cultivation System (despite its official abolition by the Agriculture Act in 1870).

King Chulalongkorn observed, for instance, that a Dutchman could take a native woman as his wife (*mi mia pen chao mueang*), either in concubinage or matrimony, but their mixed-blood child could not claim any legal right over the father's heritage if the marriage was not made legally; this included any child born before the couple were joined together in holy matrimony. In sharp contrast, a Dutch woman could get married

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[30] Thompson, *The Great Composers*, 174-5.
[31] Chulalongkorn, *Klai ban*, vol.2, 437.
[32] See Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, 95-112.

with a native, but she would have had to abolish her rights as a Dutch citizen and "gone native" by becoming a Muslim (*tae tong khat chak farang tok pai pen khaek*; literally, "but she would be cut off from being European and descend into becoming a Muslim/foreigner") in which her husband could practice his polygamy, i.e., having many wives as he wishes (*RTCW* 138).[33]

Of the native cultures, Chulalongkorn informs us about the gamelan performance, the local languages and the official languages used (e.g., Melayu, Sundanese, Javanese, and Chinese), the Wayang Wong, the Wayang Golek, the Ronggeng dancing performance, the ram fighting, and so on. But what is striking, in our view, are the king's queries to the local elite about the origins of the Panji tales. Even before he could proceed to central Java, he had attempted to inquire about the various traces of Inao from Raden Adipati "Manunyaya," the Regent of Bandung (*RTCW* 133, 138-9). It is arguable, therefore, that King Chulalongkorn's main concern in Yogyakarta and Surakarta was his search for the origins of Inao.

In Quest of the "Panyi" Kingdom

Having arrived in Yogyakarta on June 26, the king asked whether Sultan Hamangku Buwana VII (r.1877-1921) and his courtiers might dress in the Javanese costume instead of the European style for the welcoming banquet (*RTCW* 175). In his journal, the king details at some length the Javanese ceremonial protocol and court culture: the court costume and paraphernalia; the ranked order of seating, including the

[33] For a relationship of the Dutch colonial domestic histories and sexuality, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002).

places of the Dutch resident and the assistant resident; the drinking sessions in which the Champagne and wine (*lao wan*) were also served; the betel nut eating and its ritualistic aspect; the Gamelan musical instruments and its performance; the Serempi and Bedoyo dance performances; and the sacred heirlooms (*pusaka*), especially the *kris*.

All the Javanese, King Chulalongkorn said, would definitely love to talk ceaselessly about the *kris* until it was impossible to remember all that they had said (*puak chawa choap phut nak chon luea thi cha chotcham*). The potent *kris* kept as heirlooms in the Kraton Yogyakarta numbered around three hundred pieces, and each *kris* carried its own legend such as, for example, the glory of its usage in stabbing to death a famous person. In the king's account, he was informed that one of the most famous *kris* in Java was the one that belonged to Sunan Giri, one of the most respected Wali, now kept on top of his sacred tomb in east Java (Gresik). He was also told that the *kris* was originally invented during the reign of Panji Suriya Amisesa, from the Mengdang Gamulang dynasty that was likely one of the four kingdoms in the Panji tales, dating from around the thirteenth century. King Chulalongkorn himself rejoiced at the good fortune of having been presented by the Sultan with a much-valued *kris* called Mangkurat, the official title of some "Pattaram" [Mataram] kings (*RTCW* 176-93). Likewise, during his visit to the Kraton Surakarta, Susuhunan Pakubuwana X also gave him one of the most beautiful *kris* (*ngam mai khoei hen krit andai muean*) bearing exactly the same name, i.e. Mangkurat. In a surprising revelation, Prince Damrong notes that the King was told by the Susuhunan that it was the Inao's *kris* made from "lek kwan fa" (the meteoric iron) since the Inao's reign.[34]

[34] Damrong, "Tamnan rueang lakhon inao," 306.

Illustration 13: King Chulalongkorn in Jogjakarta, Central Java, 1896,
Photograph by Kassian Cephas, KITLV Collection

Illustration 14: King Chulalongkorn, Susuhunan Pakubuwana X, and M.B. van der Jagt,
Kraton Surakarta, Central Java, 1896, Photograph by Ohki, KITLV Collection

Regarding his cultural inquiries, it was rumored that Chulalongkorn was regarded as somewhat of a troublemaker in grilling people about traditional Javanese culture (*thamniam kaokae khong chawa*). The rumor was said that he was an expert (*phu ru*) and

a follower of Hinduism. It was even said that he knew a lot about Javanese culture, only because he had tried to crosscheck the stories of Inao with other Javanese Panji versions, and because he could translate some Sanskrit terms related with the Kawi in old Javanese poetry that the Javanese themselves now seldom understood (*phuak chawa eng mak mai khrai ru wa kham dai plae yangrai*) (*RTCW* 188-9).

After attempting to draw some information about the Panji tale from the Sultan, King Chulalongkorn finally reached a conclusion. He was quite definite now that the Panji tale had various versions and, thus, it would be absurd and groundless to judge which one of two Thai versions, i.e. *Inao* and *Dalang*, was right or wrong. "Inao," he said, "had a real existence, but the stories were quite varied" (*inao mi ching pen nae tae rueang tang-tang kan pai*) (RTCW 200-1). Eventually, the Sultan gave him, in Prince Damrong's words, "*nangsue ratchaphongsawadan chawa chabap luang*" (the royal chronicle of Java), possibly one of the Kraton's main Babad, and told him that one of the Jengkala kings had also gotten married with a Thai princess (*RTCW* 222).[35]

In order to trace the Inao's origin and genealogy (*ton chuea wong*), Chulalongkorn notes, the Javanese histories were drawn from various sources such as the Susuhunan (Surakarta), Panembahan of Sumenep, and Kyai Adipati Adimanggala.[36] Each account offers a different interpretation, but share a similarity in that a divided Java was eventually unified under the ruler of Janggala or Kalang, either by Panji Suryawisesa

[35] See also Damrong, "Tamnan rueang lakhon inao," 305-6.
[36] Most likely, these accounts were drawn from Raffles' *History of Java*, because these native authorities were main informants of Raffles, see John Bastin's "Introduction" in Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java* {1817, reprinted edition with an introduction by John Bastin, 2 volumes} (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988), ix-x.

or Panji Keratapati, and the descendents of this king later moved their capital to Pajajaran and, eventually, to Majapahit (*RTCW* 203-7).

Interestingly, the King was also informed about the legendary Ratu Kidul or "nang phraya thale tai" (literally, Queen of the South Sea), the potent Javanese mythical figure to whom the Sultan and the Susuhunan had to perform the annual ritual that involved offerings of food stuffs and cloths that are thrown into the South Sea. As he was told, Ratu Kidul was genealogically associated with the dynasty (*wongsa*) of both central Javanese rulers at Yogyakarta and Surakarta. Chulalongkorn also noted the belief that Ratu Kidul used to be a wife of Sultan Hamangku Buwana II (r.1792-1810, 1811-12 and 1826-8), and because of this intimate contact the Sultan was quite enthusiastic in going to the South Sea to take refuge. It was believed that the water castle in Kraton Yogyakarta was also built for the purpose of facilitating this spiritual intercourse. Since the Sultan had always fled to his refuge in the South Sea, intending to consult with Ratu Kidul, King Chulalongkorn was told that precisely because of this practice, a certain Susuhunan had been captured and exiled to Cape Town.[37] It became a regulation, thereafter, that both the Sultan and the Susuhunan could not leave the palace and its periphery without Dutch permission. But the most exciting news that Chulalongkorn picked up was that Ratu Kidul was a granddaughter of Inao (*pen lan khong inao*) (*RTCW* 241-50). The King could conclude from all this that:

[37] There were few Javanese princes, however, who had been sent into exile in the Cape of Good Hope, e.g., Pangeran Dipanegara (son of Pakubuwana I) and possibly Pangeran Arya Mangkunegara (Pakubuwana II's brother) in 1728; see M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1200*, third edition (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 113-5, and my personal communication with Chandra Utama, 12 and 15 May 2006.

> It is definitive now that Panji was not only powerful in Java, but his power had also expanded to other adjacent islands, even to Sumatra. The crucial features of his rule were the language, the architecture, and the people's attitudes and manners (*akan kiriya*). It was said that the *kris* was invented because of Panji; any city that used the *kris* would signify that it was under the Panji's suzerainty (*yu nai bangkhap*). Likewise, all the Javanese plays in the present are also related in that they were the Panji's creation (*pen khong panyi ri an len khuen thang nan*) (*RTCW* 245).

Hearing that Chulalongkorn had kept inquiring about the Panji tale, some Javanese dignitaries even anachronistically claimed that the Medal of Honor and even a diamond ring were ancient artifacts from the Panji's period (*RTCW* 295 and 312). It was not, thus, beyond belief that remnants of this bygone cultural era and tradition usually mentioned in the Thai's Panji tales could in fact be real, and trace-able, in contemporary Java (*banda khanop thamniam andai khong chawa thi dai klao wai nai rueang inao thi maidai nuek wa cha dai hen doi khwam mai chuea ko dai ma hen ma fang thong chuea yu mot laew*) (*RTCW* 381). In spite of a certain duration of time between these legendary Javanese kingdoms and the contemporary observer, moreover, a force of obsessive memories inscribed within the romantic tale had amazingly led King Chulalongkorn to invest a plain geographical locale of central Java with the imagined contours of a geo-political space fully charged with ancient Javanese history.

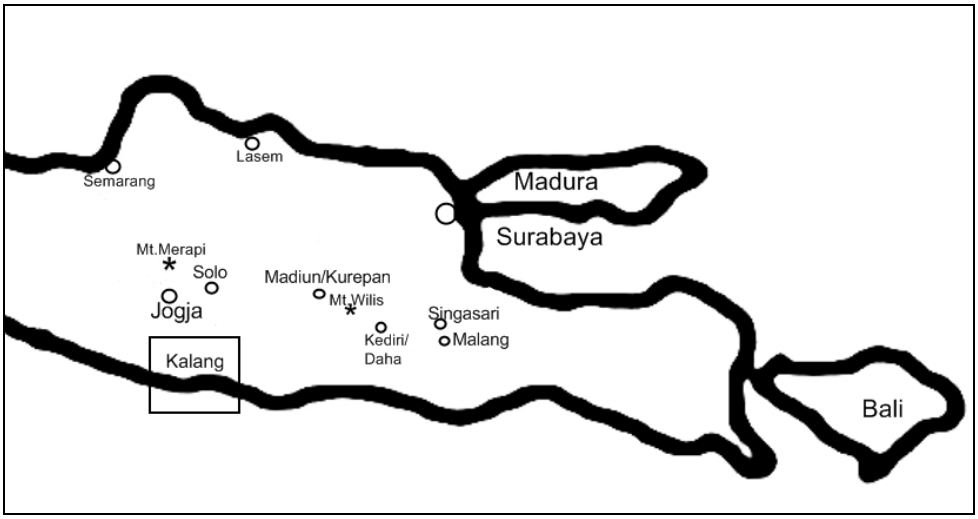
Even though King Chulalongkorn had visited Singasari and Kediri before in 1896, the focal point of his journals was his last trip through this region of Java, especially by train from Solo to Surabaya on 2 July 1901. During a stopover at Madiun, King Chulalongkorn wrote that he was quite impressed with the Surakarta court. Having just observed the grand ceremony of Garebeg Maulud a few days ago, Chulalongkorn concluded that this court was firm in its old tradition (*pen mueang chueng mi khanop*

thamniam boran yang yuen); its ruling family was real, authentic and blue-blooded (*pen chao pen khunnang ching-ching*).[38] Moreover, he quite excitedly remarked that "The way we had taken today was definitely within the 'territory' (*khet khwaeng*) of the four kings in the *Inao* story that has already been confirmed by exploration and research, except the congruity of these cities [i.e., between the legendary cities and the present remains]."[39]

King Chulalongkorn was, thus, taking pains to describe the political geography of the four legendary territories associated with *Inao*: for instance, a certain district called "Kelang" or "Kalungga" at the present could be the olden kingdom of Kalang, because that kingdom adjoined the sea and might include all coastal areas up to the present Yogyakarta. In order to authenticate his argument, the king invoked Thomas Stamford Raffle's *History of Java* that Kalang was most likely a big kingdom (*mueang yai*). Meanwhile, the city of Madiun, "Matthayom" in Chulalongkorn's opinion of its Sanskrit origin, was associated with Kurepan. As for the Daha kingdom, it was located at the present site of "Doho" or "Der Her" that was close to Kediri. The kingdom of Kediri itself was located near Mount "Wilitsamala," while the kingdom of Kurepan was on the other side of that mountain. On the eastern side of Daha, the remains of the palace and temples of the kingdom of Singhasari still existed and carried the ancient name, "Singgatsari." In Chulalongkorn's observation, these four kingdoms were located, in all their glory, in the plains area of central Java, while western and eastern Java were the hilly areas that were beyond the capacities of these four kingdoms to subjugate. Moreover, since these four kingdoms were close to the southern coastal area, the eastern

[38] Chulalongkorn, *Phraratchaniphon chotmai raiwan.…*, 150; for the account of the annual ritual Garebeg Maulud, see 133-9.
[39] Chulalongkorn, *Phraratchaniphon chotmai raiwan.…*, 150.

coastal area might be the territory of other kingdoms, such as Manya, Lasem and Pramoton.[40]



Map 1: An *Inao*-related Geography of Java as imagined by King Chulalongkorn

King Chulalongkorn's efforts to locate the origins of Panji/Inao in Java reflect, of course, the fact that the stories of Inao were pretty much loved, obsessively perhaps, by him and other members of the Thai elite. The dance performance of this story was very much alive even during their time. As mentioned earlier, King Chulalongkorn's father, King Mongkut (Rama IV), had even recently financed the building of a whole new monastery in which its main chapel was fully adorned with paintings of the *Inao* story, in order to commemorate one of his favorite queens, Princess Sommanat, who was a former court dancer. Likewise, King Chulalongkorn himself and his brothers had jointly written a sort of dialogue intending to supplement the dance performance for a centennial celebration of Bangkok in 1882.[41]

[40] Chulalongkorn, *Phraratchaniphon chotmai raiwan…*, 150-3.
[41] Chulalongkorn, *Kham cheracha lakhon rueang inao* [Dialogue of the Inao Play], {1921} (Bangkok: Rongphim namchiang, 1947).

On May 16, 1897, Chulalongkorn wrote from Venice to one of his daughters that he was quite familiar with the Italian cities because he had read Shakespeare's works; this, he added, was similar to his strong attachment to the ancient Javanese kingdoms of Daha, Singasari and Kalang.[42] Freshly returned from his long voyage to Europe, the inner court had arranged a welcome party for the king in which the dance performance of *Inao*, especially the Daha court's ritual offering at the sacred site on Mount Wilis, was surprisingly featured for this special occasion. Meanwhile, the dance troupe was directed by one of the famous dancers of the *Inao* story, Thao Worachan, a consort of King Mongkut who was now the inner court's superintendent.[43]

Having a strong attachment to the Javanese romance, the Thai elite was thus deeply stuck in the ancient Hindu-Buddhist Java inlaid within the Panji tales. One of Chulalongkorn's sons, Prince Paribatra, who lived in exile in Java after the 1932 revolution in Siam in which the absolute monarch was brought down under the constitutional monarchy, spent the rest of his life there searching for a possible trace of the original version of *Inao* in Java and finally translated a Panji tale that, thought he, was close to the Thai version. Overwhelmed by the *Inao* project, the prince even named his own palace in Bandung in accordance with the Thai's Panji tradition, i.e., Praseban,

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[42] Chulalongkorn, *Klai ban*, v.1, 249-50.

[43] Sisahathep (Seng), *Chotmaihet sadet praphat urop ro.so.116*, vol.6, 143; for an account of this particular female dancer, see Dhani Nivat, *Prawat Thao Worachan lae wichan ruang khaomul nithan inao khorng thai* [Biography of Thao Worachan and the Origin and Venue of the Siamese Tale of Inao] {1941}, reprinted in *Chumnum niphon khong krommuen phitthayalap pruettiyakon* [Collected Articles of Prince Dhani Nivat] (Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand, 1964); and see also Adrian Vickers, *Journeys of Desire*, 173.

Dahapati, Pancharakan, and Sataman.[44] One of Chulalongkorn's half brothers, Prince Damrong, who was exiled in Penang, went to pay a visit to Prince Paribatra in Bandung in 1934 and took a trip further on to Yogyakarta where the view of Mount Merapi simply overwhelmed his whole memory of *Inao*, figuring precisely as the place where Prasanta had gone to entrap the enchanted bird.[45] At the same tune, another of Chulalongkorn's half brothers, Prince Naris, was also delighted with his discovery in Bandung in 1937 of what exactly the "bunga rampai" in the Panji tales meant: A bundle of assorted fragrant flowers wrapped in banana leaf.[46]

Orientalist influence on the Thai perception of Java

Although the Thai elite's obsession with these romantic tales was crucial in shaping their perceptions of Java, the influence of Orientalists was also a significant factor. Prominent among them was the well-known Dutch archaeologist, Pieter Vincent van Stein Callenfels, a man of "colossal stature," 1.96 meters tall and 160 kilograms heavy, with a prominent belly, and a "Gargantuan laughter,"[47] who served as curator for King Prajadhipok (r.1925-35) during the latter's visit to Java in 1934.

As related in a Thai chronicle, the Dutch colonial government had provided the king with "Profetsoe Cullenfel nak prat holanda phu chamnan borankhadi lae rueang kon

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[44] Princess Sirirat Butsabong, *Phra prawat somdet phrachao borommawongthoe chaofa kromphra nakhonsawan woraphinit* [Biography of Prince Paribatra] (Bangkok: Prince Parabatra Centenary Anniversary Volume, 1981), 75.
[45] Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, *Lao rueang pai chawa khrang thi 3: prachum phongsawadan phak thi 67* [Recollection of the Third Journey to Java: Collected Chronicles vol.67] (Bangkok: Rongphimphrachan, 1937), 44.
[46] Prince Naris, *Banthuek rueang khwamru thang-thang prathan phraya anumarnrajadhon* [Notes on Various Knowledge for Phraya Anumarnrajadhon] 2 volumes (Bangkok: Samnakphim Mahalai, 1963), vol.1, 178-9.
[47] R.O.W., "Obituary: Dr. Pieter van Stein Callenfels," *British Malaya* (June 1938): 48.

prawatsat" (Professor Pieter Vincent van Stein Callenfels, the Dutch scholar who is the specialist on the subject of archaeology and pre-history), the "phu amnuaikan raksa boran watthu sathan" (literally, director of the ancient artifacts and monuments) in Java; and, possibly, the inspector of the Archaeological Service (Oudheidkundige Dienst). Apart from being the curator for King Prajadipok's visit to the archaeological monuments at Dieng Plateau, Prambanan, Borobudur and Panataran, Callenfels also brought Prajadipok to a cave in Kediri after having been asked several times about the Panji tales, claiming that it was the cave where Inao had kept Butsaba after having abducted the princess from Daha.[48] Ancient sites and ruins proved the existence of once-mythical kingdoms, and seemed to verify certain episodes previously known only through exotic, foreign tales. Suddenly the non-individualized locales in those romantic tales became real and visible. One can imagine the excitement of those Thai elites who had, one after another, come to Java searching for the Inao's origin, when they discovered the "actual" sites of scenes that had previously been imagined and relished through sweet, euphonious verse alone.

I myself was excited about the claim by Callenfels, and so, following Prajadipok's footsteps, I made a journey to this cave in eastern Java in August 2005. Apart from some artifacts in a small museum adjacent to it, the cave itself has become an object of attraction for local tourism. Structurally, the cave is cut into the cliff and has two entrances. The space inside is divided into three rooms, i.e., the private area, the common

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[48] *Chotmaihet rayathang phrabat somdet phrapokklao chaoyuhua sadet praphat Singapore chawa lae bali* [Chronicle of King Prajadipok's Voyage to Singapore, Java and Bali] (Bangkok: Rongphim rungrueangtham, 1961), 86. Notably, this cave trip was commensurate with the "first scientific excavations of a prehistoric site ever to be carried out in Java" by Callenfels at the Goewa Lawa (Bat Cave); see Robert von Heine-Geldern, "Prehistoric Research in the Netherlands Indies," in *Science and Scientists in the Netherlands Indies*, edited by Pieter Honig and Frans Verdoorn (New York: Board for the Netherlands Indies, Surinam and Curacao, 1945), 130.

room, and the religious area with a small room cut into the wall on one side, possibly for ascetic practice. Despite some Hindu influence in the decorative bas-reliefs, the main wall of the sanctity area is crafted with the Buddha image. Interestingly enough, the Panji tale was generally considered to represent a Hindu Java, not a Buddhist culture. In the classical Thai dance performance, a scene called "asking for a prophecy" during the Daha court's annual ritual at Mount Wilis usually treated the Buddha image as a symbol of sanctity. This was, thereby, taken by some scholars as proof that the Panji tale was appropriated by Thai Buddhist culture. As a matter of fact, it is evident that the Buddhist element was not the outcome of a cultural appropriation and, possibly, the Javanese cultural structure in the Panji tales needs a reappraisal.[49]

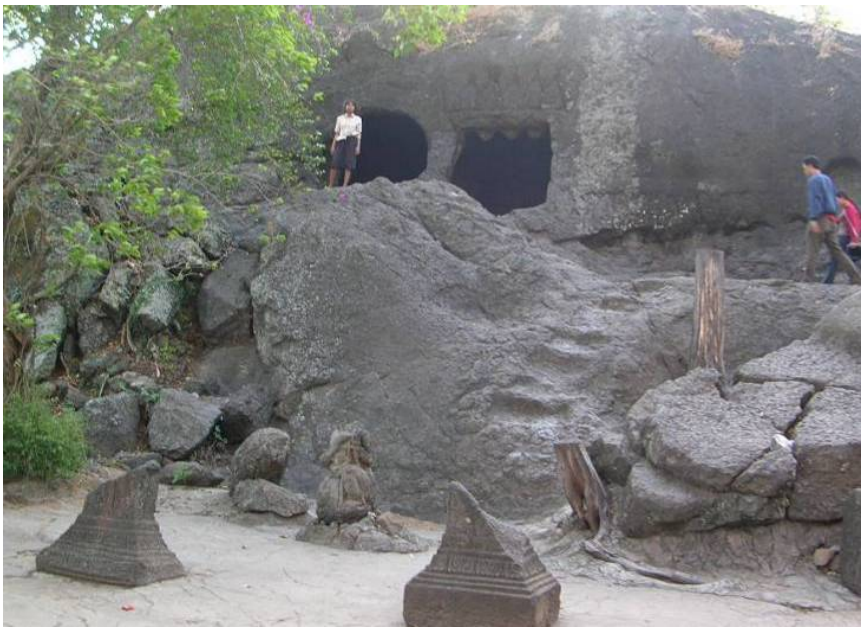

Illustration 15: Goa Selomangling/Telotok, Kediri, East Java,
picture by author, 15 August 2005

[49] See Stuart Robson and Prateep Changchit, "The Cave Scene: Or, Bussaba Consults the Candle," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV)* vol.155, no.4 (1999): 579-595.

Illustration 16: Buddha image, Goa Selomangling/Telotok, Kediri,
East Java, picture by author, 15 August 2005

The disclosure by Van Stein Callenfels is crucial, as it sheds light on the eminent role Orientalist scholars had played in the Thai elite's discovery of the Panji kingdoms. His reference was generally obscured as that of the "nak prat farang" (literally, the Western scholars) and the "nak prat phu truat khon khong boran" (literally, the scholars who excavate the ancient object).[50] As mentioned above, Chulalongkorn's main authority on ancient Javanese kingdoms was Raffles' magnum opus on the history of Java. In fact, it is arguable that Raffles' influence exceeds what is evident in Chulalongkorn's articulation of the Javanese components. In his commentary on the Javanese *kris*, Gamelan, dance performance, and so forth, the King said that these cultural materials and practices were generally believed to have been introduced by Inao himself or at least

[50] Chulalongkorn, *Phrarajaniphon chotmai raiwan.…*, 168, 197, and 202.

during his reign.[51] Undoubtedly, the King's commentary was taken almost verbatim from Raffles' writing that

> The kris is believed to have been first introduced into the Eastern Islands by Pánji; and some go so far as to assert, that all the countries in which it is now worn acknowledged his supremacy. The gámelan, or musical instruments of the Javans, together with the various dramatic exhibitions which still form so essential a part of the popular amusement, and compose so distinguishing a characteristic of national literature, are all supposed to have been introduced by him.[52]

As an architect of the Java expedition that led the British force under the command of Lord Minto, the Governor General of Bengal of the Honorable Company, to occupy the Dutch East Indies in October 1811, Raffles was thus appointed as the Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its dependencies. After taking over the administration of the islands, his biographer relates, "His habits of industry, his interest in every detail of administration, and his desire for exact knowledge in every branch of science struck the Dutch in Java with amazement."[53]

In order to introduce a reform by his government, aiming partly to meet the balance between its revenues and expenses, Raffles had commissioned a general survey of the land system, local histories, administrations, and so on, presided over by Colin Mackenzie, Chief Engineer of the British occupation.[54] During his first tour to Surakarta to secure the relationship with the Javanese courts, Raffles met Dr. Thomas Horsfield, the American naturalist who had been conducting his researches in the archipelago for some

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[51] Chulalongkorn, *Phrarajaniphon chotmai raiwan.…*, 8.
[52] Raffles, *The History of Java*, v.2, 91.
[53] C.E. Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles* {1954} (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1984), 189.
[54] See Donald E. Weatherbee, "Raffles' Sources for Traditional Javanese Historiography and the Mackenzie Collections," *Indonesia*, 26 (1978): 63-93.

years, previously under the support of Marshall Herman Willem Daendels, the former Governor-General of Dutch East Indies during the French occupation of the Netherlands. Satisfied with the success of Horsfield's enquiries, Raffles supported his research under the sponsorship of the Company. In Horsfield's account, "[Raffles] afforded me his sanction to extend my enquiries to all divisions of natural history without limitation or restriction and likewise recommended to my attention in an official communication various subjects of general curiosity and utility."[55]

It was clear that "very soon after his arrival in Java," according to Wurtzburg, "Raffles had determined to collect material on which to base an account of the island to illustrate its history and social customs with the ethnological, zoological and other details necessary to complete the picture."[56] His project led to the revival of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, founded on 24 April 1778, in October 1812 when surviving members had applied to Raffles to revive the Society. The Batavia Society was "the first European learned society established in the Far East,"[57] which aimed to conduct research and enquiry upon objects that would be "useful to agriculture, commerce, and the welfare of the colony; it encouraged every question relating to natural history, antiquities, and the manners and usages of the native inhabitants."[58] However, despite its intention to avoid "entering upon any subject which might relate to the East India Company," the Batavia Society had developed an uncomfortable relationship with the Dutch government because

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[55] Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 197.
[56] Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 197-8.
[57] Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 250.
[58] Thomas Stamford Raffles, "A Discourse delivered at a Meeting of the Society of Arts and Sciences," 24 April 1813, reprinted in Lady Sophia Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, {1830} (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991), 134-147, cf.136.

its publications could imply a criticism of the authorities. By the time the British took over Java, "the Society was virtually dead."[59]

In order to commemorate the anniversary of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, Raffles, newly elected as its president, delivered "A Discourse" at a meeting of the society on 24 April 1813. "I cannot refrain from taking a general though imperfect review," he said, "of the progress of the Society, from its first institution, nor from indulging in the contemplation of the lights, which the future exertions of its active and zealous members may throw on man and nature in these remote regions."[60] Within the light of universal history shaped by the idea of "the progress of civilization," Raffles suggested that knowledge of the native language was indispensable in forming "any accurate idea of the modes of thinking and acting among the people"[61] and, ultimately, in order to locate the rank of these native people "in the scale of civilization."[62] The aim of these queries was to "bring forth, and directing in a proper course, the latent energies and resources of so large a portion of the habitable globe… that so many of our fellow-creatures are thus gradually retrieved from ignorance, barbarism, and self-destruction."[63]

After the existence of the ruins of Borobudur in the central Java was reported to the British authorities, Raffles had commissioned Major H.C. Cornelius, the Dutch surveyor at Semarang, to investigate and produce a preliminary report before Raffles himself eventually visited the ruins on 18 May 1815 during his long trip to east Java in

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[59] Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 251.
[60] Raffles, "A Discourse…," 134-5.
[61] Raffles, "A Discourse…," 143 and 139.
[62] Thomas Stamford Raffles, "A Discourse delivered on the 11th September, 1815, by the Honorable Thomas Stamford Raffles, President," in Sophia Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 147-184, cf.182.
[63] Raffles, "A Discourse delivered at a Meeting of the Society of Arts and Sciences," 144.

that year.[64] For Raffles, these Javanese ancient ruins, i.e., Prambanan and Borobudur, "are admirable as majestic works of art" and was proof of "the grandeur of their ancestors" prior to the introduction of Islam.[65] In other words, the Javanese "ancient faith" had struck such deep roots in their institutions, habits, and affections that it "abounds in less perishable memorials" and their material expressions, e.g., ruins of edifices, sacred temple, images of deities, inscriptions, and so on, had evidently been "scattered throughout the country."[66]

Working within a discourse of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in which "the whole circle of the sciences, and the wide field of Asia" were open for his observation,[67] Raffles was intrigued by and fell under the enchantment of the great Hindu civilization. Founded in 1784 by an initiative of Sir William Jones who became its first president until his death in 1794, the Asiatic Society of Bengal had triumphantly led to "a 'discovery' of India's classical past as a Hindu golden age, or a pristine Aryan society which had fallen into declined and decadence" and "re-animating a resplendent Hindu past by identifying it as the source of Western civilization."[68] During the earlier period, the Asiatic Society had focused on languages and classical literatures; Sanskrit was learned, classic literatures translated and published, such as, for example, the *Bhagavad Gita*, Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, the law-book of Manu or *Institutes of Hindoo Law*, and so on. Its attention had, however, shifted to material remains during the early nineteenth century, especially since the appointment of Sir Alexander Cunningham (the father of Indian archaeology) to the post

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[64] Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 368-9.
[65] Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol.2, 6.
[66] Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol.2, 5.
[67] Raffles, "A Discourse…," 141.
[68] Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: "Discoveries" of India in the Language of Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 53 and 66.

of Archaeological Surveyor in 1862. Eventually, the archaeological excavation would operate in a large scale in the early twentieth century, with enthusiastic support of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India (1899-1905), who had a personal interest in it. This finally led to one of the landmarks in British archaeological excavations, namely the discovery of the Indus civilization under the directorship of Sir John Marshall in 1920s.[69]

Moreover, Raffles' attitude toward Islam in general was rather negative. Islam, according to him, "is the Religion of all others most likely to enslave the minds and bodies of mankind" and a "robber-religion."[70] Even though he had written more than a hundred pages on the natives' accounts of the early period of Islam in Java, especially the emergence of first sultanate of Demak, and a whole last chapter on a history of the Islamic kingdoms in Java after the collapse of Majapahit, (i.e., Demak, Pajang, Mataram, and so on) Raffles reiterated his deeply-held view that

> The natives are still devotedly attached to their ancient institutions, and though they have long ceased to respect the temples and idols of a former worship, they still retain a high respect for the laws, usages, and national observances which prevailed before the introduction of Mahometanism… the Javans in general, while they believe in one supreme God, and that Mahomet was his Prophet, and observe some of the outward forms of the worship and observances, are little acquainted with the doctrines of that religion and are the least bigoted of its followers. Few of the chiefs decline the use of wine, and if the common people abstain from inebriating liquors, it is not from any religious motive.[71]

In short, said Raffles, "the Mahometan religion, as it at present exists on Java, seems only to have penetrated the surface, and to have taken but little root in the heart of the

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[69] A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India* (Fontana, 1954), 4-8.
[70] See Syed Muhm Khairudin Aljunied, *Raffles and Religion: A Study of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles' Discourse on Religions amongst Malays* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2004), 14-39, cf.18.
[71] Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol.2, 2.

Javans."[72] Not unexpectedly, given his "Raffles prism," King Chulalongkorn's perception of Java would not go beyond the Hindu Java. Furthermore, the King and other Thai elite themselves were enchanted by the Orientalists' discourse on Indian civilization and became involved with the studies of Buddhism by donating a large sum of money to the Pali Text Society and its publications.[73]

Apart from his reference to Raffles' authority, King Chulalongkorn also mentioned other Dutch characters like Jacques H. Abendanon and Isaäc Groneman. As related in his journal, Chulalongkorn met and discussed with Abendanon about the salubrious places with cool weather for his winter vacation when the latter had visited Bangkok before the king's second journey to Java in 1896. Since Abendanon was the champion of the "ethical policy" who would later become Director of Education, Religion, and Industry in the Dutch colonial administration in 1900-5, no doubt their discussion also involved topics like colonial modernity and its administration.[74]

Concerning Dr. Isaäc Groneman, Chulalongkorn discussed at length his friendship and antiquarian knowledge, especially when he was accompanied by Groneman and the "President of the Archaeological Society" during his visits to Prambanan and Borobudur.[75] "Archaeological Society" here refers to the Yogyakarta Archaelogische Vereeniging (abbreviation of Vereeniging voor Oudheid-, Land-, Taal- en Volkenkunde te Jogjakarta, or the Union for Archaeology, Geography, Language and

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[72] Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol.2, 5.
[73] Patrick Jory, "Thai and Western Buddhist Scholarship in the Age of Colonialism: King Chulalongkorn Redefines the Jatakas," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.61, no.3 (August 2002): 891-918, see 905-9.
[74] Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thiao chawa kwa song duean*, 2. For a brief overview of the ethical policy and its period, see Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1200*, 193-205.
[75] Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thiao chawa kwa song duean*, 208-16.

Ethnography of Yogyakarta), founded in 1885 through the initiative of J.W. Ijzerman, the chief engineer of the state's railway lines in Java and Sumatra in the 1880s and a member of the Central Committee for the presentation of the Dutch colonial spectacle of Candi Sari in the Paris world exhibition in 1900. With the popularity of the "village javanais" (Javanese Village) in the Paris *Exposition Universelle* in 1889 and the huge success of Dutch "colonial spectacles" in the Paris's *Exposition du Siècle* in 1900, the Dutch empire was intrigued by the necessity of preserving and maintaining these "most extraordinary remnants of the art of former centuries" that led to an inauguration of the Committee for Archaeological Research on Java and Madura in 1901 and, eventually, the Archaeological Field Survey Department in 1913.[76] According to Marieke Bloembergen, the Archaeological Society in Yogyakarta was "the first step in the Netherlands' interest in Javanese antiquity in the Dutch East Indies, which would subsequently undergo professionalisation in the 1880s."[77]

Illustration 17: Isaac Groneman, Borobudur, Central Java,
Photography by C. Nieuwenhuis/Padang, 1901, KITLV Collection

[76] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 164-5.
[77] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 191-7.

As an amateur Archaeologist, and Javanologist perhaps, Isaäc Groneman was a Dutch physician who began his early career as the Kraton's physician in Yogyakarta in 1885-9. Later on, Groneman developed an interest in the history and culture of Java and became one of the founding members of the Archaelogische Vereeniging. After he succeeded Ijzerman as the president of the Archaeological Society in 1896, he gained notoriety in what was later called the "Groneman case" wherein "he aroused considerable indignation by the way in which he 'cleared' the Prambanan complex and established an archaeological museum in Jogyakarta, with pieces that 'could not be moved without causing damage to their original locations'."[78] Together with the Javanese "Kraton photographer," Kassian Cephas, Groneman published several books and articles on Javanese classical dance performance, Prambanan, religious festivals in Yogyakarta, etcetera.[79]

In their discussions, King Chulalongkorn himself made several objections to Groneman's interpretation of Buddhism and Hinduism at Prambanan and Borobudur, and eventually Groneman backed down and offered himself as the King's student, taking note of everything the King said.[80] In his account on the Borobudur, Groneman said:

> I myself laboured under the same error for many years, and even maintained it against the King of Siam, who was the first to show that it was a misconception, till I surrendered to His Majesty's convincing argument.[81]

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[78] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 199.
[79] See Gerrit Knaap (with a contribution by Yudhi Soerjoatmodjo), *Cephas, Yogyakarta Photography in the Service of the Sultan* (Leiden: KITLV press, 1999), 7-8 and 15-20.
[80] Chulalongkorn, *Raya thang thiao chawa kwa song duean*, 257-64; Chulalongkorn, *Phraratchaniphon chotmai raiwan.…*, 107, 164-5 and 172-8.
[81] J. Groneman, *The Tyandi Barabudur in Central Java*, translated from the Dutch by A. Dolk, 2nd Edition (Semarang and Soerabaia: G.C.T. van Dorp & Co., 1906), 23.

Undoubtedly, the King's influence upon Groneman became a subject of interest to the Thai elite, especially his children. In at least one correspondence from Bandung, Prince Paribatra translated a piece of Groneman's writings on Candi Mendut that was clouded over with Chulalongkorn's commentary.[82]

Meanwhile, Kassian Cephas had also taken several photographs of Chulalongkorn's visit to Yogyakarta in 1896, for which the King presented him a case with three jeweled shirt buttons as a token of his gratitude.[83] It should be noted also that Cephas's photographs about Javanese culture were also reproduced repeatedly together with the King's journal and other Thai writings about Javanese culture, i.e., Wayang Wong, Javanese court dance performances, and so on.

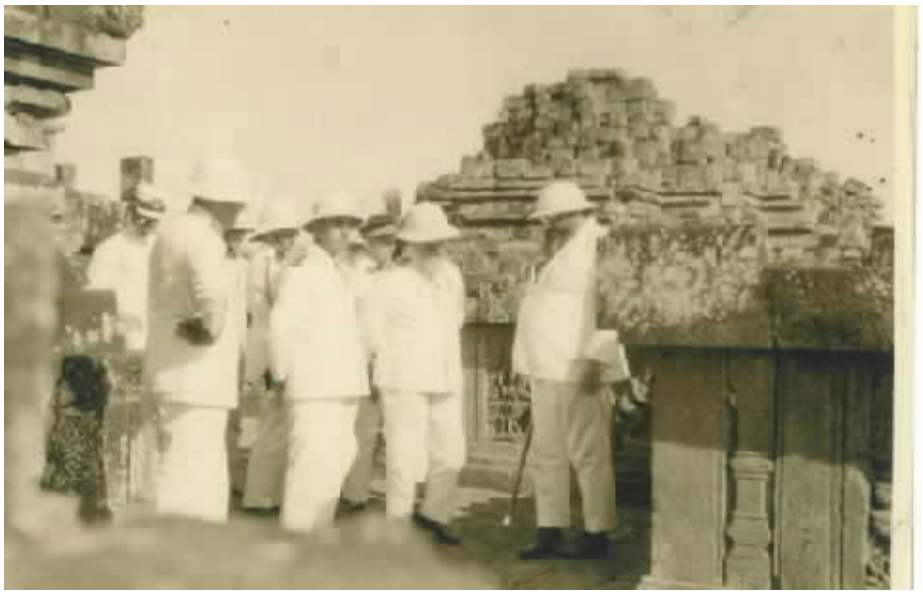

Illustration 18: P.V. van Stein Callenfels and Pierre Pasquier,
Governor-General of French Indochina, Java, 1929, KITLV Collection

[82] Paribatra to Naris, 12 October 1937; reprinted in *Pai chawa: lai phrahat lae bantuek khong somdet phrachao boromwongthoe chaofa kromphraya naritsaranuwattiwong muea khrao sadet chawa ph.s.2480-2481* [Going to Java: Correspondences and Notes of Prince Naris During his Journey to Java, 1937-8] (Bangkok: Duangchit Chitphong, no date), 122-130.
[83] Knaap, *Cephas, Yogyakarta Photography in the Service of the Sultan*, 18-20.

As for Pieter Vincent van Stein Callenfels himself, or "Ivan the Terrible" (Iwan de Verschrikkelijke) as he was called,[84] was a Leiden graduate in anthropology and archaeology. He was apparently a very influential scholar on the pre-history of Java and Southeast Asia when the earlier body of the "Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association" was founded under his leadership at the Fourth Pacific Science Congress of the Pacific Science Association, Java, in 1929.[85] Callenfels was a legendary figure in Southeast Asian pre-history and throughout the colonial world. In Singapore, what they recalled figuratively about this "Rabelaisian professor" was that "the chair on the veranda almost shuddered as it saw him coming." At dinner, what "he ploughed through" could provide enough food to keep another for a week.

> He sucked furiously at the soup, swallowed two helpings of fish, three piled plates of meat, two of sweets, drank three bottles of beer, chased it with four large cups of coffee, several brandies, bellowed, criticized, called for whisky, chewed the end off a cigar, wooshed blue gushes of smoke to the ceiling.[86]

Callenfels' repute as an enthusiastic academic was highly praised by R.C.H. McKie, the author of *This Was Singapore*, who wrote that

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[84] B.D. Swanenburg, *Iwan de Verschrikkelijke, leven en weken van dr P.V. van Stein Calenfels* (Masstricht: N.V. Leiter Nypels, 1951).
[85] On his influence in the prehistoric studies in Southeast Asia, see Heine-Geldern's "Prehistoric Research in the Netherlands Indies" that was published "in memory of P.V. van Stein Callenfels." I owe this reference to John N. Miksic.
[86] R.C.H. McKie, *This was Singapore* (Sydney and London: Angus & Robertson, 1942), 72-6; for a lively reflection of Callenfels' life and works, see also Victor Purcell, *The Memoirs of a Malayan Official* (London: Cassell, 1965), 275-284.

> When he first appeared in Malaya few had ever heard of him; prehistory was an abstruse subject, something for specialists. When he sailed on his last voyage he, a serious scientist, had popularized his subject and given to history a few more scattered pages… Callenfels of the Indies was more than a famous figure who roared through life. He was timeless. And he left behind him a legend of bulk and humour and scholarship which cannot die.[87]

Among the Thai elite in particular, Callenfels had generated a considerable impact in outlining their studies of the Panji romances and, more significantly, in emplotting a general structure of the history of Java, notably articulated through the pen of Prince Damrong, the so-called father of Thai history. As Damrong relates in a recollection of his third journey to Java published in 1937, the prince had met Professor Callenfels, the Dutch scholar (*nak prat holanda*), in Bangkok when he was still the president of the Vajirañana Royal Library (the State Library) and they met each other again in Penang when Damrong was in exile after the 1932 revolution and Callenfels was invited by the British colonial administration in Malaya to direct an archaeological excavation in Perak.[88]

Having told Damrong that he had just brought King Prajadhipok to the Panji cave in Kediri, Callenfels also delivered a private lecture on the Panji subjects, as a romantic tale and as a history. Because of its variations, the Dutch scholars had previously thought that the Panji romance was simply a nonsensical tale that could not be treated with a historical perspective (*nithan cha chuea fang pen phongsawadan mai dai*). Nevertheless, in the two decades since the inauguration of the "archaeological council" (*sapha truat khon borankhadi*), i.e., the Archaelogische Vereeniging, they had found some ancient inscriptions that could provide a historical basis for the Panji romances (*rueang inao mi*

[87] McKie, *This was Singapore*, 76.
[88] Damrong, *Lao rueang pai chawa khrang thi 3*, 85-6.

khoa nguean pen phongsawadan yu-bang). Together with other pieces of evidence and archaeological monuments, claimed Callenfels, a general structure of Javanese history (*phonsawadan chawa*) prior to the Dutch occupation could thus be formulated.

Accordingly, Javanese history could be broken up into four periods: 1) pre-history, 2) Indian domination, 3) Majapahit, and 4) Mataram. For the pre-historical period, there was an open field for archaeological research that could not yet reach a general conclusion (*yang mai long nuea pen yutti*). There was now, however, a possibility that the original Javanese people (*manut phuak chawa doem*) might formerly have inhabited southern China from time immemorial before they had to migrate south to the Java islands.

During the period of Indian domination (*samai chat India khrop khrong*), as this historical emplotment goes, there came the merchants from southern India who brought with them the script characters that shared similarities with the ancient Javanese inscriptions. Recognized as men of some repute in preaching about Indian civilization and knowledge to the local people, these merchants possibly married into the royal families and became the rulers of these ancient kingdoms. The first Indian kingdom in Java, Taruma, was founded around the fifth century by a Shivaite king, Purvavarman, in the region of contemporary Batavia. Subsequently, two other kingdoms were founded in the eighth century in the northern port of Java (Semarang) and in eastern Java (Surabaya).

Contemporaneous with the appearance of these Hindu kingdoms on Java, Indian influence in the form of Buddhism was also taking hold in Sumatra under the patronage of Srivijaya at Palembang. This kingdom was extremely influential. Its power had even expanded to Patani, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Chaiya, and central Java, although it was not

clear whether this was by conquest or by marital alliance. In Java, Srivijaya had built several Buddhist monuments, notably the Borobudur in the ninth century.

Within this historical emplotment, Callenfels located the appearance of the *Inao* stories (*rueang inao*) in Javanese history from around the tenth century. In the Chinese chronicles, he said, the Srivijaya king had sent his envoy to China in 992 who could not return to his kingdom because a battle had broken out between Java and Srivijaya. This fact was congruent with a Javanese inscription that the Javanese kingdom was devastated because of a foreign enemy in the eleventh century; all members of the royal family were slain except for the princess who was married to the Bali king, Utthayan (Pali: Udayana). In order to help his queen in reclaiming her kingdom, King Utthayan had to fight with the enemy for thirty years. Having successfully expelled the foreigners, the Bali king and his queen restored their son, Raden Alangkar (Airlangga), to rule over Java. In another inscription found in Kediri, King Alangkar had a princess from his queen and two princes from his concubine. Since the princess did not want to involve herself with the kingdom's affairs, King Alangkar thus split the kingdom into two halves for the two princes. From these two kingdoms, Daha and Kurepan, there came the legend of Inao. With the marriage between Inao and Butsaba, the two halves were thus reunited again. His reign, referred to in the inscription as that of King Kamesavara, started in the early twelfth century (1107), and he was said to be the powerful king, both Java and Sumatra being subjected to his rule. Nevertheless, his successors were not powerful as him; the power in Java was eventually seized by a certain Singasari king in 1222.

Subsequent to the civil war between Daha and Singasari and the Chinese attack, Raden Wijaya - a son in law of the Singasari ruler - had managed to mobilize the people

of both kingdoms and secure a new independent state, called Majapahit. During this period, a certain king was eventually successful in subjugating again the whole of Java. In the middle of the fifteenth century, there arrived important new elements for the Javanese historical emplotment: The Muslims, mostly Persian and Indian merchants, and the Portuguese. Apart from trading, these Muslim merchants attempted to proselytize the local Hindu-Buddhist pagans, and this led to Islam's wide dissemination in Java.

According to Callenfels, as inscribed in Damrong's text, the introduction of Islam would lead Javanese history into another period, the Mataram. In spite of the adoption of Islam in Java, which took place by a peaceful conversion (*koet lueamsai*), and contrasted markedly with the Arab and Indian experience of becoming Muslim through fear or coercion (*klua phai rue chamchai*), the Javanese Muslims were able to retain their ancient Hindu-Buddhist customs and traditions (*phuak chawa chueng raksa khanop thamniam doem tae khrang yang thue phra phuttha satsana lae satsana phram wai doei mak*). Nevertheless, the religious difference had caused a hatred (*rang kiat*) for each other. When the Muslims had built up their strength (*kamlang*), they eventually seized power from the Majapahit Empire. They could not, however, maintain their power and so another Muslim group was able to move to the central Java and found a new kingdom called Mataram. In order to secure its suzerainty, Mataram had to wage a long campaign against other petty powers in Java, until the reign of "Raden Mas Rangsang" who crowned himself as the Sultan, "Hamang Puwano," in 1627.

Having been posited within the boundaries of colonial scholarship, Javanese history, in Damrong's emplotment influenced by Orientalists such as Callenfels, was finally sealed with the Dutch occupation. Dutch merchants first arrived in Java in 1595,

eight years before the founding of Mataram, and rented the factory in Jayakarta, close to the Portuguese. These two European nations then fought with each other until the Portuguese were forced to leave Java. This left the Dutch as the sole European power in Java, sheltered within the formidable Batavia Fort. In 1619, the Jayakarta kingdom also fell into Dutch hands and a city was thus built in its place, called Batavia, following the fort's name. As the capital of the Dutch in the east, Batavia became essentially a stronghold for the expansion of Dutch power in Java and other islands.[89]

It is obvious that this "phongsawadan" was not articulated in the traditional style of writing on kingship and genealogies, but was an attempt to formulate a unilinear emplotment of the totality of Java's history. It was structured in the same manner as Damrong's earlier lecture, i.e., "Sadaeng banyai phongsawadan sayam" (Lecture on the History of Siam) delivered at Chulalongkorn University in 1924. Damrong had provided a sweeping picture of the history of Siam that was drawn from its prehistory, the existence of ancient kingdoms prior to the migration of Thai people, the rise to power of the Thai people, the successive Thai kingdoms and dynasties, their domination and assimilation of other ethnic groups, and lastly, the Thai resistance to the western powers.[90] Likewise, Javanese history was expanded to cover the whole sweep of the past from Java's prehistory to the Dutch occupation, and overflowed with mention of various kingdoms and dynasties, including especially a genealogy of the Inao dynasty. Through the Orientalists' researches (*kan truat khon*), Damrong could, thereby, "discover" and

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[89] Damrong, *Lao rueang pai chawa khrang thi 3*, 90-99.
[90] See Wirasak Kiratiworanan, "Kan sueksa kan phanna kan plian plaeng chak 'sayam yuk kao' pen 'sayam yuk mai' pho.so. 2367-2411" [A Study of the Narrative on Historical Change from 'Traditional Siam' to 'Modern Siam,' 1824-1868] (MA thesis, Department of History, Chulalongkorn University, 1998), 65-7.

locate the *Inao* stories within a landscape of Javanese history authenticated by "historical facts" provided by an authoritative professor of the so-called "solid science" of Prehistory. By locating the Panji romances within a unilinear emplotment of the Javanese history, *Inao* was not simply taken as a romantic tale but as a part of history (*phongsawadan*). In short, it was not just a tale, but ultimately a genealogy of kingship in Java.

This historical originary was expanded further by Prince Dhani Nivat in his various writings on the subject of Panji tales. After having compared several Panji versions and consulted the works of authorities such as, for example, George Cœdès, A.J. Bernet Kempers, W.F. Stutterheim, Poerbatjaraka and R.O. Winstedt, Dhani Nivat concluded that these romantic tales were indisputably based on a historical foundation (*nithan lao ni chai wa cha mai mi mun haeng khwam ching loei ha mi dai*).[91] More precisely, according to him, the stories that tended to glorify Inao were in fact drawn from his grandfather, namely King Airlanga (*thang prawatsat prakot wa pen rueang kong phra aiyakathirat*).[92]

It became a tradition for students of Thai literature, thereby, to read *Inao* as part of Javanese history. Most strikingly, the imaginary character of Inao is not only authenticated as a historical figure but distinctly becomes a source of categories of meaning for understanding Javanese leaders. Soekarno, the Indonesian national leader, was thus explained in a Thai biographical sketch of his life as "a modern Inao" (*inao*

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[91] Krommuen Phitthayalap [Prince Dhani Nivat], *Wichan rueang nithan panyi rue inao* [A Review of the Panji or Inao Tale], {first published in 1939} (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Nang Pramotchanyawiphat, 1972), 7-11.
[92] Krommuen Phitthayalap [Prince Dhani Nivat], "Kham nam" [Introduction], in *Dalang* (Bangkok: Cremation Volume of Queen Srisavarinthra, 1956), (6)-(12), cf. (9).

samai mai).[93] Framed within a sort of traditional model of kingship, Soekarno's charisma was associated with a mythic power (*ittirit*) and merit (*bun*). That is, his birth was astonishingly marked with a volcanic eruption and his kiss could even heal a sick man. Similar to the hero of the Panji romance, this strong leader of the Inao country (*phu nam thi kraeng kla khong mueang inao*) was also compared to Inao in the sense of being a virtuoso lover (*nak rak*).[94] In order to make sense about modern Java and Indonesia to the Thai readership, it has been necessary to discursively envelope them within the eighteenth century romantic texts that deeply connected them with Hindu-Buddhist cosmologies. Viewed through this prism, Indonesian political decisions and actions are seemingly reasonable to the Thai.

We have seen in this chapter how King Chulalongkorn's first journey to Java in 1871, his first encounter with the colonial modernity, resulted in the Thai bureaucratic system being reformed to parallel the European colonial administrations. Later, in order to keep pace with the progress of civilization and to save Siam from being colonized by the West, histories and cultures of the nation became a prime concern of the court. Thus, Chulalongkorn's second encounter with Java in 1896 was overwhelmed with a preoccupation with Javanese culture and heritage, especially relating to Inao's originary trace.

Apart from the Panji texts in the Thai literary tradition, Orientalism provided another crucial lens through which Chulalongkorn and other Thai elites viewed Java and searched for the Inao land. With the disclosures from archaeology and other scientific

[93] Wilat Maniwat, *Sukano* [Soekarno] (Bangkok: Khlangwitthaya, 1971), 220-1.
[94] Wilat, *Sukano*, 3-10.

disciplines, the Inao story that was once merely a romantic tale could eventually become a “proven” historical episode within the Thai emplotment of a unilinear history of Java.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Attempting to find a proper vantage point from which to broach Indonesian studies "from within" Thai society, I have been caught up with the constant reappearance of Inao that – like an apparition – keeps haunting the Thai readership at almost every mention of modern Indonesia in Thai print culture.[1] I have tried to argue in this thesis that *Inao*, deeply embedded in the Panji tales, is the bedrock of Thai perception about Java and Indonesia. Considered as a certain thread representing the common culture of, in Adrian Vickers' term, "the Panji civilization" in Southeast Asia that could possibly suggest "characteristics common yet unique to the area,"[2] Inao offers us not only certain crucial categories of meaning that framed Thai society's perception of Java, but also an alternative knowledge foundation to the more common understanding of Southeast Asia, particularly its internal relations, in terms of categories derived from the West.

We have endeavored in this thesis to thoroughly interrogate the subject of our studies, *Inao*, and its influence on the Thai understanding of Java. In Chapter Two, we started with a glance at the influences of the Panji tales on Southeast Asian literary traditions, especially in Java. Thereafter, the Thai renderings of the Panji texts were then discussed. In order to introduce the reader to the flavor of the popular Thai version, *Inao*

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[1] There is an article recently published in Thai edition of the *National Geographic* featuring the native people in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Strangely enough, even the Irian Jaya is also viewed now as the Inao land; see Thomas O'Niel, "Khon dip daen inao" [The Raw Man of the Inao Land], *National Geographic* (June 2007), 146-159; originally this article was published as "IRIAN JAYA Indonesia's Wild Side," *National Geographic*, vol.189, no.2 (February 1996).

[2] Harry J. Benda, "The Structure of Southeast Asian History: Some Preliminary Observations," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, vol.3 (1962): 106-138, 109.

was summarized and some episodes translated. As we have seen, this is a romantic tale and its journey is, to cite Vickers once again, a "journey of desire." Driven by the force of passion, the hero and the heroine depart on a long journey in search of each other. Apart from its connotations of bodily pleasure, desire here is also clearly charged with a political scheme. A journey ends thereby not only with a reunion of the couple, but also with a new constellation of the Javanese political structure: a reunion of Kurepan and Daha, plus a new set of its tributary states.

In Chapter Three, we moved on to questions related to our texts such as Thai authorship and translation. We explored a concept of poetics and a prosodic convention in Thai literary tradition in which authorship and the creative act were not central in the emplotment. Instead, the preoccupation was with the generation of euphonious sound intended to create a musical effect in the Thai versification. Authorship was thus less significant in the tradition of reworking the poem in order to improve its rhyming sound. Congruent with our query on authorship, we looked into the function of the Melayu as a medium of its translation and how their language, Melayu, served as a *lingua franca* of cross-cultural communication in Southeast Asia, including the Ayutthaya court and its trading port.

A local mode of translation and its practice were also tackled in Chapter Three. Similar to other Southeast Asian locales in which foreign knowledge was rearticulated in a local idiom, the Panji romances were more or less "translated" into the context of Thai experience. The "original" tales were thus adapted in many ways, and expanded to include the Panji variations. Nevertheless, the original Panji theme resisted such practice and retained certain features of its Javanese components. Having been translated at the

very moment of cross-cultural conjunction in which commodities were traded and cultural elements exchanged, the Thai Panji text strikingly inscribes such moment in a translation of the Melaka episode from *Inao*. We showed how this represents a poetics of trans-cultural communication that captured the possibility of communicative failure at the moment of cultural contact.

Having meditated on questions related to authorship and translation, in Chapter Four we discussed the issue of the Thai representation of Java. Ultimately, this turns out to be the Hindu-Buddhist Java. The Hindu-Buddhist cosmologies and components of this complex and multi-layered society are clearly dominant in Thai representations. Nonetheless, since the Thai version was scripted at the moment when Islam was very influential in Java and Southeast Asia, Islamic elements are seen to emerge at the Javanese periphery, i.e., the coastal areas. In order to set the tale within the foreign atmosphere, several "Javanese" components were manipulated here and there. For instance, topological sites such as a certain mountain in eastern Java were identified in the texts; foreign tongues claimed as "Javanese" terms were evoked throughout; and even costumes were intended to generate a sense of the foreign garb. In discussing the subject of Javanese appearance we brought up another Thai Panji version, titled *Dalang*, in which Javanese elements are heavier and a certain memory from the ancient Javanese legend of kingship was deliberately scripted within the text.

Apart from the above elements, other crucial aspects in the Thai emplotment of Panji texts were the frequent use of disguise by means of name-change and the emergence of a peculiar logic of (mis)recognition. Having camouflaged one's own identity by changing name, a normal mode of recognition becomes obsolete. A certain

effect of disguise is thus the slippage of identity. Identity could, then, be repeatedly changed and fabrication was thus encouraged. Authentic identity became a real concern to the Thai authors and readership in a mid-eighteenth century Ayutthaya that was slowly gravitating towards the money economy where authorship gradually gained an exchange value as discussed earlier in Chapter Three; a certain technique to forge the elements of one's own self was thus invented. Nevertheless, the frequent use of disguise not only generated, eventually, a failure of recognition within the Panji texts, but also possibly led to the Thai readership's misrecognition of its "Javanese" appearances or components.

In order to portray the *Inao*'s influence, Chapter Five argues that its translation in the late eighteenth century had sent a wave of excitement throughout the Thai literary landscape. The Thai literary circle became obsessed with the Panji tales and its Javanese elements. In short, the Javanese appearance became a sort of fetish for cultural consumption. Javanese lexical elements became popular and Panji texts themselves became an essential part of the theatrical repertoire. Induced by a certain obsession with the Javanese components associated with the Panji tales, an early nineteenth century subversive poet turned the court fetish into a laughable subject. The *Inao*-related court language was thus unhinged from its royal signifiers and was shockingly placed alongside subaltern, diasporic characters. Contemporaneous with this literary montage and induced by its playfulness with the relationship between sign and referent, the "Javanese" sound that was intended to evoke excitement through its foreignness among the Thai audience/readership, generated a completely new literary invention in Thai poetry. That is the employment of the empty sign, a signifier that links to nowhere, and clearly intends to be playful with the exotic "Javanese" sound. Instead of comparing its

author to a lunatic, intoxicated by the euphonious sound, we suggested that this was a sort of creative act of the poet who composed her works in a Thai literary tradition that paid much attention to euphonious rhyme.

Deeply obsessed with the Panji tales, the Thai elite's perception of Java could not but be shaped by them. In Chapter Six we show how *Inao* was not only influential in the Thai court's literary culture and theatrical repertoire, but in fact became the prism through which the Thai society viewed Java. Inao, the Panji hero in the Thai text, thus became a crucial component of the Javanese logo. In writings and documents about Java and Indonesia, ranging from royal chronicles and private journals of some Thai elites, to public media such as newspapers and so on, Inao has been continually invoked as a source of categories of meaning for the Thai readership. Journals of King Chulalongkorn during his journeys to Java in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries were thus largely dominated by the subject of Panji tales and his search for its historical origin. A romantic tale that once existed merely in the literary imagination had thereby become connected and charged with a historical factualness that could be proven with the aid of solid science, such as Prehistory and Archaeology. And this part of history could even be posited within a deep, unilinear historical emplotment of Java that was greatly influenced by certain writings of the European Orientalists such as, for instance, Thomas Raffles and P.V. van Stein Callenfels. Historical connection was established, and this explains how Soekarno could be understood in a Thai popular history text as the modern Inao, powerful yet charming.

In spite of the changes that the Javanese have experienced for many centuries, Inao continues to appear at every moment almost like the ghost of a specific period of the

past. The perception of Java in Thai society has been trapped within the Panji trope. *Inao* offers us, thus, not only an alternative prism through which to view Java but also shows us the effect of this prism on the Thai understanding of modern Indonesia. The Hindu-Buddhist Java is dominant, and Islam is peripheral to our view.

Postscript

With the abrupt, renewed uprising of the Patani movement in the early morning of 4 January 2004, the Thai authorities' response reveals how uninformed they are about the Melayu world and how little sympathy Thai society at large has for the deep tradition of their Melayu heritage.[3] If the tradition discussed in this thesis were paid more concern, perhaps mutual understanding might prevail and the situation would be different. Nevertheless, the violence and terror in the South during the past few years does not deny a major assertion of this thesis that the Melayu language played a central role in Thai traditional knowledge production about Java. In spite of their intimate relationship, to the extent that this thesis has attempted to show, it is evident that a structural change in terms of knowledge production and global politics has shifted the focus and the taste of Thai elites toward the hegemonic European civilization and its episteme. Within that context, the traditional knowledge faded and became obsolete. Likewise, Melayu lost its exclusive function as a medium of transcultural communication. The daily violence in the South at present sadly reveals a lack of knowledge that once existed, and the obvious dominance of certain categories heavily drawn from the Western discourses on the region. We do hope that, in a small way, this thesis might help to bring back to the public awareness a

[3] For accounts of this movement, see Duncan McCargo (ed.), *Rethinking Thailand's Southern Violence* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2006).

long tradition of understanding and close relations. Living together in this already painful and suffering world would, thus, become tolerable.

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